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THE WRITER AT CALGARY, 1891.

SEEKING FORTUNE
IN AMERICA

BY

F. W. GREY

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1912

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Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

PREFACE

In the early 'eighties lads who preferred exercise to examinations looked abroad for work, and parents who feared their failure in competitions agreed with them. Ditties like—

> "To the West, to the West, to the land of the free,
> Where the mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea,"

had long moved our agricultural class America-wards; perhaps the next line—

> "Where a man is a man if he's willing to toil,"

did not so much appeal to middle-class youth, but there were always visions of "broncho-busting" and rope-swinging. Moreover, no one in England, of whatever class, knew what "toil" meant, as understood in Canada and the States.

Land was easy to get in those days, free grants of 160 acres on certain conditions of exploitation which were often evaded. After weary search from Iowa northward I reached a rolling country dotted with small lakes and groves, leading up to the beautiful valley of the Little Saskatchewan. My driver said that some land which I fancied here was certainly taken up, but I saw a Scotchman ploughing and we foregathered. He told me that the other holders around were "jumping" new grants elsewhere, and that the little "breaking" which they had done did not fulfil conditions. Investigation proved this, and I bought two square miles at prairie value from the railway whose line was to traverse this very land. My son eventually did not use it, and, twenty years later, still as "prairie," it fetched enough to cover the original price *plus* accumulated interest and taxes.

My son was right; farming, as I saw it in my wanderings, was not attractive. In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, the surroundings were delightful, but profits seemed small; while the prairie, from the Canadian Pacific Railway down to Iowa, though certainly productive, was to my eyes as heart-breaking as the plains of India.

Travelling south from Buffalo, after a visit to the Guelph Agricultural College, which later received my son, a farmer joined me. He was Yankee to look at, but his tongue was Devonshire. It attracted a rough-looking customer in our carriage; he was Cumberland, and we three exchanged ideas. Cumberland was a wanderer who had worked all over the States up to the Pacific; Devonshire was naturalised, and thereon Cumberland took him to task. Devonshire, he said, had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Devonshire submitted that he could live on the pottage, while Cumberland did not seem to thrive on the birthright. Both had been agricultural labourers at home, and now Devonshire had a little holding nestling in one of the lovely vales which we were traversing. He could live thereon, certainly, but what a life! Cumberland, I think, had a better time, while able for the varied work which he could always find. Better for either would have been our army, navy, or police. That class does not know the soldier's advantages when he has risen to sergeant and stays in the army.

Sore though my son's struggle was he was right not to farm. Certainly he lost his capital, but this is the normal English lot in the States; at his mine in Texas a man came for a watchman's job who had started with £4000! Such, it seems, is the "footing" which the gentle, handicapped by their traditions, must necessarily pay. Nevertheless, those traditions are an asset, as this book shows; so are horsemanship; the athletics and the "straight left" which public schools taught in those days if they taught little else; also a straight eye and steady nerve behind a pistol. My son's experience may not tempt others of his class to seek fortune in America, but if they do so they will learn therefrom what to expect, in what spirit to meet it, and what equipment they need.

L. J. H. GREY.

March 1912.

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Seeking Fortune in America

CHAPTER I

"Thousand-pounders" — Ontario Agricultural College — Political Meetings — Volunteer Artillery — Value of the Agricultural College.

The Western States and Provinces of North America thrive on our "thousand-pounders" and "remittance-men." Some years ago in one small prairie town of Iowa there were 105 young Britons on the books of the local club. One of these (dubbed Sitting-bull after a famous brave) was doing fairly well in a milk-walk; a few others earned livings as farm hands; the rest were, said the natives, "doing no good." How should they, unless to the manner born? Four young sons of farmers and parsons, all neighbours from Owersby, Walesby, and other Lincolnshire "by's," bought a "raw" farm on instalments in the Red River Valley. A land-seeker was sent there by the owner. "He has not got us yet," said the lads; "we are ready with our instalment." But he got them at last, with their improvements—homestead, stable, well, and many acres under plough. That is how the "thousand-pounders" nourish the West; not that these Lincolnshire men had so much between them, but many collapse with even more capital, for lack of experience. And even afterwards the experience, thus bought at a long price, does not generally lead to much.

In 1890, 1280 acres of carefully-chosen land awaited me in Manitoba, bought from and traversed by the Manitoba and North-Western Railway. To qualify myself for farming this land I went to Guelph, in Ontario, Canada.

The Ontario Agricultural College is recognised as one of the finest institutions of its kind on the continent of America, because of the thoroughness of its methods and the class of graduates it turns out. There are graduates of this college holding professorships in many of the agricultural colleges of the States, others in charge of large farming interests, and also of some of the largest dairies in the country.

Students have come here from Mexico, Argentine, and even from Japan, sent by their respective countries. I am sorry to say that the majority of us English students did not come up to the general standard, frittered our time away, and thought more of standing high in the estimation of the girls down-town than in that of the professors. The great handicap under which an English student labours at the college is the fact that he has no practical knowledge of farming while he is trying to learn the technical and scientific part. I could not, for instance, appreciate duly the fact that there were over a hundred different varieties of wheat, when I could not tell wheat from barley growing in the fields. At a live-stock examination I once attended, the examiner had two sheep in the room. "Now," he said, "here are a Cotswold and a Shropshire ram; I want you to give me what are the best points of each class, and then try to find them on the rams in front of you." I had all the good points of both sheep as per text-book on the tip of my tongue, and got them off in good style, and then proceeded to demonstrate them on the specimens in front of me. When I got through, the examiner said, "Very good indeed, but unfortunately the one you are describing as a Cotswold is the Shropshire, and *vice versa*." And the worst of it is, that to this day I do not know if he was joking or not, as he gave me a "pass."

The college could accommodate about two hundred students, most of whom boarded inside, though this was optional. The course was of three years for the degree of B.S.A.—Bachelor of the Science of Agriculture. They also used to give a certificate at the end of the second year for those students who could not complete a full course. The first year's work was to a large extent general education, for the benefit of the farmers' lads, being courses in literature, mathematics, and chemistry, though there were also lectures on agriculture, dairy-work, and veterinary science. The lectures were in the mornings and every alternate afternoon, the other afternoons being filled with practical work on the farm, for which the students were paid, according to their ability, from 1 cent to 10 cents per hour. The second year there is more of agriculture, chemistry, veterinary science, &c., and less of other matters; and the same applies to the third year. During the long holidays from June to September the students who so desire can remain and work on the farm under pay. This enables students practically to pay their way through college without assistance from their people. The college farm consists of some 600 acres, some 200 of which are under cultivation, though a large tract of this is given up to experimental work with different kinds of grains, different admixtures of soils, &c. The college also grows all varieties of fruits and flowers that do well in that climate. They have fine specimens of the different breeds of cattle, hogs, and sheep, for use in the lecture-rooms; also a splendidly equipped dairy, where cheese- and butter-making is taught.

For the athletic side of education there was a fine gymnasium and swimming-pool, and a recreation field for football, baseball, &c. Here, we English students were in our element, and, so far as I remember, during the two sessions I attended lectures at the college the football club was almost entirely composed of Englishmen, though there were some fine Canadian players in the team also. The students were supposed to be fed entirely on the products of the farm, and the meals were certainly unequalled in any hotel in the city. Still we kicked on general principles, as men do almost everywhere. On one occasion the boys thought they were getting rhubarb-pie and rhubarb-pudding too frequently, and sent up a note to that effect to the president, who, of course, ignored it altogether. Then, of course, it became a matter of honour that the rhubarb should stop, and next morning there was not a plant of rhubarb growing on the college grounds. It cost the students a fine of $1 per head, but every one was happy.

The college was supported by the government of the province, which at that time was of the "Grit" or Liberal party, and the students were all enthusiastic politicians whenever they could get off in the evening to attend a political meeting. I remember one night I was on my way to a dance, but was prevailed upon to go first to a political meeting with the boys. When we arrived, one hundred strong, at the City Hall, we were refused admittance. But, putting the football team at the head of the wedge, we soon arrived close up to the stage. On either side of the stage were hoses and nozzles for use in case of fire, and some brilliant genius took one down and turned it on us. Then the fun really began, for we stormed the stage, got hold of both hoses, and watered up that assembly good and plenty. We were most of us pretty damp, and I know, as I clambered down a fire-escape, that my shirt front was not in condition for a ballroom.

Our president, Mr. Mills, was one of the finest men I have ever come across, and the boys all thought a great deal of him. There was a door between the college and his private house, and he used to say that he never allowed college matters to pass that door. No matter what trouble you got into in the college, you were always a welcome guest in the president's house. I early got into the bad graces of the Professor of Agriculture, who had no love for English students, and the word was passed to the farm-foreman to see that no easy jobs came our way. This finally led to my rustication. I had been invited out to an "At Home" one evening, and that afternoon happened to be hoeing sugar-beets when the farm-foreman came along. I asked him to let me off early, so that I could wash and change my clothes. He, thinking to be sarcastic by giving what he thought to be an impossible task for me, said, "You can go when you have hoed five more rows." I asked him to mark them out, and then started in to make the weeds fly, and, incidentally, some beets also. I got through about five o'clock, shouldered my hoe, and started home, when I met the foreman. He asked me where I was going, and I told him I was through. He came back and found it as I had said, and then told me to go back to work, as he was only joking. I told him I did not understand jokes of this sort, and started off. Then he lost his temper, ran after me, and tried to use force to stop me. He was, of course, much stronger than I was, but, unfortunately, did not know how to handle himself; so after a short session I went on my way rejoicing. When I returned to my room that night I found a note from the agricultural professor—who was in charge, as the president was away—giving me twenty-four hours to clear out, for insubordination and assaulting my superior.

I borrowed a tent, and went into camp. One of my friends down-town happened to be a big political gun, and the next time I was at his house he asked me all about it. I told him the facts, and within a week I got a letter from the Minister of Agriculture asking for proofs, which I forwarded in the shape of letters from other students who had been working with me at the time. By return mail I got a letter ordering my reinstatement; and the next morning, when I applied for my old room it was given me without more ado.

Guelph has two Volunteer Artillery companies, one filled with students from the college, and one with town boys, four guns to each battery. I joined the college battery, and after a couple of months of steady drill in Guelph we were taken out to camp at Niagara, on the lake near the falls. There were five or six other batteries there also, some cavalry, and some infantry. One day while standing listening to the band I got into conversation with an artilleryman from Welland, and after some talk found, to my astonishment, that he had been a room-mate of mine at Westward Ho. Since then I have met two or three other boys from the old school. It was wonderful how quickly they licked us into shape, for the Canadian lads are, like the Americans of the south and west, natural soldiers, being bright, intelligent, anxious to learn, and able to stand considerable hardship—as was proven in the Riel rebellion, and also, I think, in Africa, where some of my old Guelph friends went. That the college turned out good men is proved in the person of the president. He had worked his way through college practically without assistance from his people, took his degree at the head of his class, and with it a professorship in the Mississippi Agricultural College. Then, after various other positions, he was selected as president of his former college on the retirement of our old head.

I would advise no young English lad to go to the college until he has worked at least a year or two on some Canadian farm to get the practical knowledge necessary to really get the good out of his college course. He should also have the rudiments of a good general education. Here I might mention that the college did not teach spelling; in this country it is not thought as much of as in England, and nearly all Americans are bad spellers. For instance, the business man who, on reading about Roosevelt's spelling reform, said that he could not see anything new about it, as that was the way he had spelled all his life! If here and in other places I seem to roast Americans, they must not be offended, as it is meant in all good nature; and they must also remember that I have been roasted by them for the past sixteen years, and this is the first time I have had a chance to get back at them without giving them a chance to answer me.

CHAPTER II

Calgary—A Cow-puncher—"Roping"—Life on a Ranch—A Calgary Hail-storm—"Gun-plays" and "Bad-men"—Sarci Indians.

LEAVING the Agricultural College at Guelph on the start of the summer holidays of 1891, I took advantage of settlers' cheap rates and went to Calgary, at the foot of the Rockies, to try and get some practical experience. After drifting round for a week, I found that green Englishmen were at a discount, but finally managed to get work with a Mr. Berney, who owned two ranches, one within three miles of town, and the other on Pine Creek, about thirty-eight miles out. Mr. Berney asked if I could ride, and on my saying yes, told one of the boys to bring out Bill and saddle him. I noticed all the family (consisting of four grown girls and two boys) and most of the men loitering round in front when I proceeded to mount, but thought nothing of it at the time. I rode Bill out a mile or so, circled him at a good speed, and rattled him up to the house, trying to show off, as a young lad will, in front of the girls; but I noticed they all looked very disappointed. After this trial I moved my baggage, and was duly installed, and Bill was turned over to me as a saddle-horse. I found out a month later the meaning of the trial and the girls' disappointment. I had come in from town, taken off my saddle, and proceeded to ride Bill down to the creek to water; I had on a pair of box spurs (which are taboo in the cattle country), and, coming up the steep bank, I happened to touch Bill with one of the spurs, and the next second I knew what bucking meant. Luckily the ground was soft. George Berney told me then that the horse had originally belonged to a livery stable in town much frequented by cow-punchers, where, originally a bad bucker, he had been trained by means of cockleburrs put under his saddle blanket to become an expert. Every young man who came to the stable looking for a mount, and bragged of his riding, was given Bill. But one day a young Englishman, who insisted on saddling and doing for himself, rode Bill to a standstill, and in an English saddle! So Bill was sold for a song to Mr. Berney, and the family had hoped to see some fun when I mounted; only it happened to be Bill's day off. I moved to the out-ranch, and learned to do many kinds of work, and found out that on a ranch one did many things besides ride, such as building log corrals seven feet high and sixty feet across, with two wings to guide the cattle right to the gate.

I built cattle stables, horse stables, and fences all out of logs of spruce, and during the five months I was there I broke twelve or fourteen horses to the saddle. None were very bad, and I was never thrown again in Calgary, though I had a rather nasty experience with a half-broken mare. She was seven years old, and had never had a rope on her, but in a couple of weeks, during odd times, I broke her and thought she was gentle. Her only fault had been rearing, and she never bucked or kicked. One day I put on my best tight riding-breeches and top-boots, and started off to show her to some friends of mine on Sheep Creek, about sixteen miles away. About a mile from our shack I had to cross Pine Creek, which has high steep banks, but luckily very little water. Going up the opposite bank the mare suddenly took it into her head to rear, and the next instant we were off the bank and into the creek. I fell clear on my feet; but the mare, falling square on her back, had buried the horn and pommel of the saddle in the bottom of the creek, and could not turn over. I grabbed her head, and could just keep her muzzle out of the water, though the rest of her was under. I shouted and shouted, and emptied my pistol, and did all I knew to attract attention, till finally, after about twenty minutes which seemed hours, the local scout of the mounted police came to see what was up, and helped me to get the mare out. My clothes were a sight, and I split the knees of my riding-breeches as I fell.

I had learned to rope fairly well on foot, but never made much of a success of it on horseback. By the way, the word "lasso" is never heard in the cattle country; the phrase is "roping." After I had learned to rope stumps, and could catch Bill two throws out of three, I began to think I was a star. I went to a local round-up on Pine Creek, and went into the corral to get out a mare and yearling colt that belonged to us. I was rather nervous after I once was in, but made my throw after the approved fashion from the ground, and to my amazement captured the mare and colt in the same loop. I had a gay ten minutes; but some of the boys, after they got through laughing, came to my assistance, roped the mare by the legs, threw her, and got my rope off. In a corral it is not permissible to whirl a rope round your head, as it frightens the animals, but the throw must be made from the ground, where the coil is spread out. Only in Buffalo Bill shows, where it gives more flourish to the proceedings, and sometimes when roping from a horse at the gallop, is this done—*i.e.* whirling the rope—and I have seen good ropers, both in Canada and Texas, even in the latter case trail a rope behind and throw it with one forward swing. Another point about ropes is never to tie one to the horn of your saddle while riding, if you have anything at the other end. I had gone out one day to bring in a two-year-old heifer from a neighbouring ranch. After getting my rope on her horns, I took one turn round the horn of my saddle, and proceeded to pull her home, she protesting. After we had gone a few miles she quieted down, and I thought I would take a smoke. I tied my rope in two half-hitches to the horn of my saddle, got out my tobacco and papers, and proceeded to make a cigarette. Just then simultaneously my horse stopped dead and the heifer circled me on the dead run, and I could not get the brute of a horse to turn. I cut away the rope before it cut me in two, and gained another experience at the cost of a fine waxed linen rope and a sore waistband.

My life on the ranch was far from being all hard work, and so it is on most ranches, though probably I was more favourably situated than most, owing to the owner having a large family who were fond of amusement and could well afford it. We had picnics, surprise parties, and dances, in all of which we hands had our share, being treated as members of the family. The work, of course, was not neglected on these occasions, but so arranged as not to interfere, and if some one had to stay behind we took it in turns. The theory of a surprise party is as follows. A number of young people arrange to have a party at a certain person's house; all the edibles are cooked beforehand and taken along by the guests, and the hosts are taken by surprise. But so many accidents occurred, such as the hosts going to bed early, or, worse, going out and locking up the house, that in practice notice is generally given to the hosts of the proposed surprise a couple of days beforehand. The people in the West are most hospitable—in fact, this applies to a great extent to all Canada. A stranger is always taken on trust till he proves himself unworthy. Riding past any ranch-house near a meal-time, the owner will call you to come in and eat, if he is at home. Should he be out, however, you will generally come across a note like the following pinned to the door: "Have gone . . . will be back . . . the key is under the stone to the right of the steps. Go in and make yourself at home." This I have often done, hunting out his grub and cooking what I needed; and on one occasion, getting caught out at night, I fed my horse, ate supper, and went to bed. I woke up when the owner returned, smoked and talked with him (a complete stranger) till he was undressed, and turned in again till morning. In the morning you get up, help with the chores (odd jobs such as feeding the stable animals), have breakfast, saddle up, and depart.

Calgary is a beautiful place on the slope of the foothills, at an elevation of about 3400 feet, rather cold in winter, but delightful in the summer and fall. On the out-ranch, however, where there was a lot of timber, the winged pests—mosquitoes, gnats, horse- and deer-flies—made work in the woods very trying, more especially the two latter, whose bite will draw blood every time. The surrounding country, especially out towards Fort McLeod, is full of immense sloughs, where the wild slough grass will often grow to a height of five feet, and as much as 1000 tons can be cut off a single slough. But haying is made hard work by the gnats and mosquitoes.

It was while haying that I first saw a Calgary hailstorm. George Berney was running the hay-rack (which consists of an immense crate on wheels, so that it can be loaded and handled by one man) and I was raking, when, looking up, I saw terrible blue-black clouds rolling up the valley towards us, for all the world like Atlantic rollers. I shouted to George, lifted the rake, and headed for the house, about a mile away. By the time we had the horses safely in the stable and got over to the shack, the storm reached us. I have never seen its equal before or since. We could hear the roar of the hail long before it reached us, and when it did reach the clapboard roof it was deafening. One stone we measured was eight and a half inches in circumference, and seemed composed of about a dozen smaller ones congealed together. We had about twenty chickens killed; and some people lost heavily, losing even colts, calves, and pigs. The oat-crop, which was being harvested at the time, was so cut to bits and driven into the ground that not even straw was saved.

My first experience in Calgary was with the mounted police, for as we stopped at the station three policemen boarded our tourist sleeping-car, and while one stood guard at each door, the third walked over to one of the seats, lifted the spring cushion, and pulled out from the recess underneath a 2½-gallon keg of whisky. He asked the porter if it was his, and then asked every passenger, but all denied any knowledge of it. It was then taken outside, the head knocked out, and the whisky emptied on the ground. Of course the police had received previous notice from some one, possibly the very man who had sold it and knew its destination.

This prohibition of whisky, combined with the mounted police, has kept the North-West Territories from becoming, like Montana and Texas, a land full of "gun-plays" and "bad-men." Not but what there has been whisky smuggled in in carloads of kerosene cans; there have also been "gun-plays" and "bad-men," but they are the exception and not the rule, as further south. How easily a "bad-man" is made the following will show. A young fellow, well known and well liked round Calgary, got on a spree, and, after mounting his horse, proceeded yelling down the street. A city policeman (distinct from the mounted police) tried to arrest him. The puncher (cowboy) took down his rope, and galloping past the officer, roped him, and dragged him down the street at the end of the rope; finally he dropped the rope and rode off, leaving the officer seriously hurt. So far, only a Western version of what the university students used to do to the English police. But the sequel was different. The young fellow, instead of coming in the next morning, giving himself up, and taking his medicine, took to the hills, and it was up to the mounted police to bring him in. The open-house system I have mentioned before made it easy for him to live. But living in the hills and being hunted is demoralising, and the next thing was a "hold-up" of the Edmonton stage, for funds to leave the country, in which a man was killed. A reward was then offered for him, and people were warned not to harbour him. He was finally killed one night in town, shot from behind as he stood against the lighted window of a saloon looking in. Whether he was killed for the reward—which the killer was afterwards afraid to claim because of the young man's friends—or whether it was a private grudge, no one ever knew, as the man who did it never came forward; or possibly he was killed for the money he took off the stage.

There is something peculiar about the air of the West which makes a man take readily to a gun and wish to be a law unto himself; but it is a strange fact that the worst "gun-men" the West has produced were easterners, and generally city-bred. Though in this case the mounted police had no success, they are generally on the spot when needed, as I saw on the Calgary racecourse one day. One of the onlookers called one of the jockeys a thief, and accused him of pulling a horse in the race. He had hardly finished speaking when the jockey, riding close up to the fence, slipped his stirrup-strap, and cut him over the head with the stirrup. They were both punchers, and their friends took it up, and two or three guns were drawn. But before anything occurred three mounted police rode up; one arrested the jockey, and the sight of the others soon restored peace.

The doctor for the Sarci Indian reservation, near Calgary, was Mr. Berney's son-in-law. During the Riel rebellion the Sarci head chief promised that none of his bucks should go out; but, unfortunately, he fell sick, and the young bucks began to get restive, though as long as he was alive they did not dare to disobey the old chief. Dr. George told me he never had a case in his life where so much depended on his keeping his patient alive. However, the old man pulled through, and only a few stragglers joined the rebellion; had he died, Calgary would have been in the greatest danger. These Indians are a lazy, dirty lot, but have wonderful natural endurance. A mounted policeman told me of a chase an Indian on foot led him and a mounted comrade. They ran him eight miles before they captured him, and only twice did they get within roping distance of him, when he dodged like a rabbit. After leading them over the roughest ground he could find, he finally circled to where there was a herd of Indian ponies grazing, as his last chance. But one of the policemen headed off and stampeded the ponies, while the other, getting within striking distance, knocked the Indian down. The Blackfeet, though, are the only really troublesome Indians, as they are such inveterate thieves. A homesteader on the head of Sheep Creek came home one night to find his door-lock broken and all the food in the house carried off. While investigating, he found in a "draw" close to the house a camp of eight Blackfeet bucks enjoying his provisions. He kept his temper, and picking up what he could carry, took it up to the house. About his third trip he found out that the Indians were playing with him, for as fast as he could carry the stuff up they were carrying it back to the tepee. Then he lost his temper, and instead of going over to the nearest police scout and reporting the matter, he thought he would play a lone hand and scare the Indians. He pulled out his pistol, and throwing back the flap of the tepee, fired in two or three shots, without being very particular whether he hit any one or not. Unfortunately he killed one of them, and the others ran, being unarmed except for their knives. As soon as he realised what he had done, he caught his horse, came into town, and gave himself up. The police hustled him off to Regina, and that night his house was burned and his stock killed.

Of course the Calgary I am speaking about was Calgary of 1891, a town of about 5000 people; now it is a city of nearly 20,000, and the surrounding country is fast becoming a farming instead of a ranching section. Large irrigation works have been completed, and land is too valuable for grazing. The Indians mentioned here are very different from those to be seen in the States—for instance, at Pipestone, Minnesota. There the Indians used to hold their "truce of God" and smoked the pipe of peace, and they still frequent those rocks and hawk the pipes and other curios of soap-stone. But how changed from the braves of Ruxton and Cooper and Reid! The proud Pawnee now looks more like the degraded "digger Indians" of Mayne Reid! In the Dominion, however, the Indians have not been crushed as in the States; they were still formidable at the time of the Riel revolt some twenty years ago, and they can hold their own even now

CHAPTER III

Road-agents—"Roping" contests—Broncho-busting—Strathclair—A blizzard—Lumber camps.

MONTANA, just across the line from Fort McLeod, was for years an example of what the North-West Territories might have been if it had not been for the mounted police and prohibition. There, in its earlier days, gun-men and even road-agents flourished, and killings were of everyday occurrence. In fact, at one time in Virginia City the sheriff, Plummer, was at the head of a band of organised road-agents which terrorised the country. Finally, the people rose in desperation, and following the example of California, formed a society of Vigilantes, and hanged all the bad-men, including the sheriff. Most of these men when cornered died like curs, but there were individuals, like George Sears, who at least knew how to die. When he was taken to the place of execution, he asked for time to pray, which was allowed him. Afterwards he made a short speech, in which he said he deserved his fate, but his contempt of death showed when requested to climb up the ladder which was to serve as a drop. He said, "Gentlemen, please excuse my awkwardness, as I have not had any experience. Am I to jump off or just slide off ?"

In Montana, Indian Territory, and Texas, great roping contests are organised every year, and cow-punchers flock from all over the United States and Canada to try for the very valuable prizes that are offered. In San Antonio, Texas, some years ago was held a great contest for the championship of the world, in which the first prize was $6000 (£1237); silver-mounted saddles, gold-mounted pistols, and other prizes were also offered. The steers used in these contests are the very wildest that can be got. They are held in a large corral, and turned out singly through a gate in a chute. One hundred and fifty feet back from this gate sits the cow-puncher on his horse, with his rope coiled and one end tied to his saddle-horn. The minute the steer is clear of the chute he can start. He must rope and throw the steer, and tie three of its legs together in such a way that it cannot rise. As much or more depends on the horse than on the man, and some of these cow-ponies are truly wonderful. Out comes the steer with a rush, and away goes the puncher after him with his rope whirling. He makes his throw, the rope settles over the steer's horns, and as it does so the pony stops dead, sticking out his feet in front and bracing himself for the shock. The rope grows taut along the steer's flank, his head is jerked round, and down he goes. Meanwhile the puncher, as his pony stops, drops off and reaches the steer almost as it hits the ground, with his tie-rope in his hands; and while the steer lies for an instant half-stunned, he deftly makes a hitch over three legs with what is known as a hog-knot, jumps to his feet, and throws up his hands as a sign that he is through. The pony, without rider, can be depended upon to keep the steer down by constantly side-stepping to keep the rope taut if the steer attempts to rise.

At El Paso, during the roping contests there, Clay McConagill did this feat in the wonderful time of 21½ seconds, counting from the time the steer left the chute till Clay's hands were in the air. He is the champion Texas roper, and holds the world's record for a single tie. But in a long-distance contest held in San Antonio he was beaten by Ellison Carrol of Oklahoma, who tied in this manner twenty-eight consecutive steers in 18 minutes and 58½ seconds, or an average of 40⅔ seconds each, one of these ties being made in 22 seconds flat, or within ½ second of the record. One who has not seen these contests can hardly form an idea of the speed and skill both of horse and man necessary to accomplish such a feat as this, or of the excitement among the audience of cattlemen, all of whom, being good riders and ropers themselves, can appreciate every move made. There is considerable risk also attached to it. For instance, a friend of mine had the misfortune to get a coil of his rope round his arm as he threw, and as the rope drew taut it cut his hand off at the wrist; and yet he had been born and raised on a ranch! The S.P.C.A. are now trying, if they have not already succeeded, to put a stop to these contests on the ground of cruelty to the steers. But I can see no sense in this, for steers are roped and thrown every day in this manner on the ranch, during the season of the screw-worm fly, in order to kill the worms with carbolic and chloroform, and they do not seem to be very much hurt; and this is where the puncher gets his practice in the course of his work.

Great broncho-busting (horse-breaking) contests are also held in different parts of the West, where the worst horses from all over the country are brought for the men to try on. In these contests, if a man lay hand on any part of his saddle, or tries to lock his big spurs into the girth of the saddle, he is disqualified. At one of these contests, Sowder, one-time champion, for a bet drank a bottle of soda-water, without spilling a drop, while his horse was bucking. Some horses develop a devilish ingenuity in trying to get rid of their riders. They will buck straight ahead, and suddenly, while in the air, make a twist and turn almost end for end by the time they land. They will buck and twist first one way and then the other alternately, squealing all the time with impotent rage. There used to be a big negro in Calgary called Uncle Tom, who never seemed so happy as when on a bad horse. When his horse bucked, his face would suddenly open back to the ears in a grin, and he would holloa, "Dere's de boy, good boy"; and when the horse tired, he would pull off his hat and whack it over the head and flank.

When I left Calgary, I took a flying trip home, and on my return decided to go up to Strathclair and look over our land there. I was met by W. Geekie, a neighbour, who took me over to his house to stay; but as my movements were uncertain, it was decided to leave my trunks at the station for a few days. Geekie, I found, was all prepared to start off on a trip, hauling provisions up to a lumber camp near Lake Winnipegosis, so I offered to accompany him and drive one of the teams. This was in mid-November, and the cold was bitter, but with a good fur coat over a pilot jacket I expected to be all right. We started out the next morning, five big freight-sledges and a jumper (small home-made sledge) for the provisions and bedding, six men all told, and five gallons of whisky for the eight-day trip. Strathclair with the surrounding country is a settlement of Highlanders, and they were as hardy a lot of men as I have ever come across, but very clannish. I had two or three "Black Angus" steer hides tanned with the hair on for lap-robes, but found that, in order to be comfortable, I had every few miles to drop off and flounder through the snow to start a good circulation. The others mostly used whisky for the same purpose.

We encountered one blizzard on the trip, and I found out that they are not so black as they are painted, for directly the snow commenced to fall, the temperature rose, though the wind was very disagreeable. The flying snow, however, made it impossible to proceed for fear of losing the way, so we pitched camp in a clump of tamaracs. We slept out some of the nights, and the experience is not so bad as might be expected, provided you can get plenty of spruce-boughs and a place sheltered from the wind. Steer-hides and spruce-boughs make a very comfortable and warm bed if you pull in your head like a turtle.

If I had a very great enemy, I would wish him a job in a lumber camp, if they are all like the one we went to. A long house of one room, about 20 feet by 30 feet, with bunks built up on the walls; one door as the only opening for ventilation; a large cook-stove in the centre, which was always full of wood, and served the double purpose of heating and cooking. In this room lived about twenty men—French Canadians, half-breed Indians, and other conglomerations. Here they cooked, ate, slept, washed, and dried their clothes steaming against the stove, and cursed if the door was opened for a minute. After seeing a decrepit Irish cook dropping ashes and nicotine from his pipe into the food he was preparing for supper, I fled outside, and stayed out during the night and part of a day we remained there. I doubt if these men washed their bodies during an entire winter. Such a state of affairs would not be tolerated even on a "Stag" cattle-ranch, and I have seen a dirty cowboy taken out by his fellows, stripped and scrubbed, and the operation never had to be repeated; nor could he resent it, as he could not fight the entire ranch.

CHAPTER IV

An injured knee—The "Laird"—Kit destroyed by fire—Hunting round Strathclair—Trapping—"Batching."

I MAY here record a little experience I had in Calgary, which, while it turned out all right in the end, caused me considerable excitement at the time. I and George Berney were batching at the out-ranch on Pine Creek, getting out black poplar posts for a fence we were building at the home ranch. We used to take it in turns every couple of weeks to go into town with the wagon for the mail and provisions, taking in a load of posts at the same time. On one of these occasions, when it was George's turn to go, he told me he was going to stay in town for a couple of days to go to some entertainment or other that was coming on. He left at dawn, and I took my broad-axe and went out to square up some logs we were dressing for a grain-house we were going to build. After I had been working some little time my axe glanced off a small knot, and the heel of the blade went into the hollow inside the left knee, just below the knee-cap. I must mention that I am a left-handed chopper—that is, I hold the butt of the axe-handle in my left hand, and so work on the left side of the log I am standing over. The cut was not very serious, though for a moment it numbed my leg. However, I went over to the house and bound it up, and stopped my chopping for the time being. In a couple of hours my leg had swollen to twice its normal size and throbbed furiously, and by noon I could not walk without considerable trouble. By afternoon I was considerably worried, being young and inexperienced at the time, as I could not expect George back till about the evening of the fourth day, and my nearest neighbours were two miles away; and by night I had it all figured out that I was due to cash in my checks. That night and the next morning I used my gun to try and attract attention, but no one heard me. But about four o'clock in the afternoon I heard a wagon coming up our trail, and soon was delighted to recognise our own horses, and George driving. Some matter of importance in connection with the sale of some horses had turned up, and his father had bundled him back to attend to it. The team was too tired (having done seventy-six miles, half of the way loaded, in two days) to make the return trip that night. I would not wait till morning; and as we had no other driving team, George caught my horse and saddled him, and, by dint of wrapping and rolling my leg up in plenty of cloth and slipping on my leather "chapps," I made the thirty-eight miles into town to Dr. George, who soon had me up and around again.

Now to return to Strathclair and Manitoba, about which I was writing. On our return from the lumber camp we made a detour, and stopped one night at Charlie Geekie's house. He was the eldest of four brothers who were settled in the neighbourhood; he was known as the Laird, and was at the time I mention reeve of the township (a sort of mayor); a fine old Highlander he was, too. I drove a jumper, with a five-gallon keg of whisky in the hind end, in his interests during the election, which happened to be held while I was there; but, unfortunately, he was beaten. During the evening that we stayed at his house, which was perched up on a hill, some one noticed a glare of fire in the direction of Strathclair, which was about ten miles off. But as we were too far off to do any good, and it was late, we decided not to go in till morning. How some nights stick in one's memory! That is one I shall not easily forget—the red-hot stove, the deafening squeal of the bagpipes, played by the laird (who was an immense, bushy-haired and bushy-bearded man). He was a sight to see as he pranced up and down, full of whisky and music. This he and his brother alternated with old Scotch songs and ballads, while we refreshed ourselves with whisky, which we drank out of polished horn cups. One of these the laird gave me, which I kept as a memento for many years after. Horn, he told me, was the proper vessel to drink out of, as no one but yourself could know the size of your tot! In the morning we went on to Strathclair, to find that the fire had been in the railroad station, which was burned to the ground, including the station-master's house and the freight warehouse. All my trunks were lost, and I had nothing left but the clothes I stood in, my rifle, shot-gun, and a few things I had in a gladstone bag. This necessitated my return to Guelph to replenish my wardrobe; but Geekie was pressing in his invitation to stay on a few weeks, and draw on him for anything I needed in the way of clothes.

The hunting round Strathclair was very good, there being plenty of rabbits, prairie chickens in myriads, and a few miles north, in the timber country, plenty of moose, elk, and spruce partridge; while on the prairie there was plenty of fun to be had shooting wolves, coyotes, and foxes for their pelts, and in trying to trap them. I say trying to trap them, as I put in a week at the game, trying every device I had ever read or heard of, and only succeeded in catching one coyote in a trap. However, I poisoned a good many, using a rabbit for a drag on horseback, and dropping baits at intervals; but in this method there is considerable trouble in finding your game after you have poisoned them, as they will sometimes travel miles from where they picked up the bait, and trailing on hard snow is slow work. The most satisfactory way is to shoot them, and I got more this way than any other, but it means heavy walking in the snow. Geekie had a fine larder, such as is only found up in that country. It consisted of an unchinked log-house, in which hung, while I was there, three sides of moose and simply hundreds of prairie chicken and spruce partridge, uncleaned and unplucked, but frozen as hard as a rock. This was his winter's meat supply. I heard a story there, in regard to being careful while trapping, about a poor old man who made a living trapping, and who was accidentally found with both his hands caught in a trap he had been setting, and which was chained to a log. He had been dead a couple of days when found, from the cold. No one will ever know how such a man, who had spent years at the business, came to be caught.

Manitoba is not all prairie, nor timberless, as so many people imagine. In the west and the south are immense stretches of country, dead level, and with hardly a tree; but north, on the Manitoba North-Western Railroad towards Strathclair, the country is rolling, and there are patches of timber, mostly small. Still farther north the country gets quite hilly, and there are large stretches of fine timber. It is all capital wheat country, and also good for cattle, the only drawback being occasional summer frosts and poor means of transport, though this latter will soon be remedied by the advent of the new Grand Trunk Railway which is building across the country; and also, as I understand, the Hudson Bay Railway is finally to be built. The country, however, is far from beautiful.

The people dispense hospitality with a lavish hand so far as they are able. The accounts of toasting and drinking in India in the early days remind me of a dance I attended near Strathclair, where the host, having lost the use of his legs, lay propped up in his bed (his bedroom being used by the men for their wraps and coats), with a keg of whisky on a chair by his side. There he lay in state, not too far gone still to dispense his hospitality and drink with every one who came into the room. After a few weeks' stay I left Manitoba and returned to the college at Guelph. In the spring of 1893 I started for Chicago, really to begin the earning of my own living.

The expression "batching," mentioned before, means men doing for themselves—a rough business out West. Exhausted with labour, the man comes in, has a wash, cuts and toasts some rashers, prepares scones, half-burnt, half-raw, from the barrel of flour in the corner, and brews coffee. He had no time in the morning to sweep or to make his bed. There it is, some tumbled blankets in a box of straw; and after a pipe he rolls into it, to sleep like a log till habit wakes him an hour before dawn to split wood, fetch water, light a fire, and prepare his meal as before. Such was the *ménage* of the young Lincolnshire men referred to in the first of these experiences. Such was the life which awaited myself but for the fire which destroyed, not my trunk only, but my farming outfit, and made me abandon the idea of exploiting my land in Strathclair. But if Western farming life is hard for men, what is it for women who are not to the manner born? The natives can stand it, also the Russian, Scandinavian, and German immigrants, all of the labouring classes. But "back to the land" is madness for well-nurtured Englishwomen; better the shop, or even domestic service.

CHAPTER V

Chicago—American Business Methods—Work as a Carbonator—Chicago Fair—"Hard-luck" Stories—Remittance-men.

CHICAGO, which lays claim to having the largest in everything, whether it be drainage canals, skyscrapers, slaughter-houses, or the amount of railroad traffic, is certainly a wonderful city.

The first thing that strikes any one on arrival is the hurry and rush. Everybody seems to be going somewhere in a terrible hurry, but after you have been there a few months you find yourself getting into the same habit. My first position—*i.e.*, appointment as distinguished from job—I got through a friend, a Mr. Bole, of New York, who gave me a letter to the Chicago Great Western Railway, where I secured a post in the claims department of that road. Here I worked two months, and drew the large salary for a beginner of $50 per month. Then there came a change of management, and out I went along with hundreds of others. Here, let me remark, lies one of the curses of American business methods. A new head of a department, new manager, or new president in any corporation, generally means a change of men all the way down the line, as all of them have men of their own to fill the places. So that generally a superintendent, manager, or president has a set of men that follow him around from place to place. These are his henchmen, and he sees that they get places where he is. They are, of course, efficient, and men he can trust, and whom, therefore, he wants near him ; but what of the poor devils that are ousted ?

Of course none of this applied to my case, as I got my position through pull (recommendation), though I had to hold it down myself, and naturally went as soon as my pull went. But I have known many cases where there was much hardship and wrong done. I know a man who worked twenty-six years for one railroad corporation, working his way up from brakeman to divisional superintendent, which position he held during the four years I knew him ; a harder worker and a finer man I never knew. A new president was elected from another railroad, and this man and five other divisional superintendents were forced to resign in the first three weeks of the new reign, to make way for men off the railroad from which the new president had come.

Long service can claim no reward as in England, and that is why there is not the same loyalty of the men to their employers as there; and that is why a man is always ready to leave one firm and give his work and the experience he has gained to an opposition firm, provided there are any inducements offered. However, the main thing was to get another job, and I was lucky enough to hear of one almost at once. The firm who had the soda-water concession at the fair-grounds were looking for carbonators, and were offering $3 per day; so I hastened to apply. I had not the remotest idea what the work consisted of, but in America that is not considered a bar to a man applying for any job. When I was shown into the august presence, he snapped out, "What do you want?" I replied, "Job as a carbonator." He scribbled on a piece of paper, handed it to me, and said, "Report Monday, office electrical building," and I was duly hired. Luckily, he was too busy to ask me for any references. The next thing was to find out what I was hired to do. So off I went to the fair-ground, and looked around till I saw some men installing a soda-fountain in one of the buildings. These I asked where I could find one of the carbonators, and, getting the desired information, I looked the man up, got into conversation, and, finding him a decent sort of fellow, proceeded to explain to him the situation, and offered him $5 if he would show me the work and teach me enough to pass inspection the Monday following. He started right in, and I spent the rest of the time with him, learning to rock the cradle, handle the gas-tanks, and watch the pressure-gauge—in fact, all the secrets of carbonating. On Monday I reported for duty, and was given a section of about a hundred tanks, which I was supposed to keep charged. The company had about two hundred soda-fountains in the grounds, and about twelve hundred tanks scattered all through the buildings. I have a natural bent for mechanics, and also great good luck, and I was soon able to carbonate with any of them. In fact, I got quite "cocky" about it, till one day my pride got a fall, and under unfortunate circumstances. The firm who had the concession were wholesale liquor dealers, and one of them who had taken a fancy to me (the reason I will explain later) would sometimes stop and talk to me if he met me on my rounds. Well, one day I was just going down into the basement of one of the buildings to charge some tanks, when he came along. So as not to delay me, he came down into the basement with me, to talk while I worked. We were in the midst of a great discussion while I happened to be screwing the cap into one of the tanks, and being so interested in the conversation I was careless, and did not notice that the cap had "cross-threaded," and that, when I thought it tight, only about two or three threads were holding. I opened the gas-tank cock and commenced rocking, talking all the time while watching the gauge. I had almost got it to 140 lbs. pressure (which was the pressure we used, so that there should be lots of froth and little liquid), when bang! fizz! away went the cap, and soda-water was shooting all over the place. It was a sight to see that fat man take those steps at a bound; and I only waited to shut off the carbonic acid gas-tank, before I followed at the same gait, to head him off from the office. He was near the head of the stairs getting his breath when I reached him. I managed to calm him down, and explained what had happened, and how, and begged him not to report me. He promised not to, but said "he thought it a most dangerous occupation." He had taken a fancy to me for two reasons, first because, when time hung heavy on my hands and I had nothing to do, I would go over to the office and ask them if there was not something they wanted done, and would carry "small change" out to the cashiers and bring in the bills, and, besides, never kicked about working a little late, as we sometimes did in the evenings. Of course, when we worked over an hour late we got extra pay for it; but what

I allude to is the ten or fifteen minutes late we often were. The second reason was because I was English, and he a rabid American of the "greatest-country-on-earth" type; and he loved to argue with me on the relative greatness and strength of the two countries. I really think that when I left the firm's employ he was beginning to believe that the State of Rhode Island alone could not lick the British Empire, but might need some assistance from Delaware!

Out in the lake, near the British building, a half-sized model had been built, of brick, of the battleship *Illinois* (or the cruiser *Chicago*, I forget which). One day this man insisted on taking me over to look at it, and then said to me quite seriously, "Now do you really dare to tell me that there is a ship in the British navy as big and fine as that?" To argue with such a man as this one has to stretch a point, as Americans are very fond of doing, and I told him that a boat of that size was generally used as a pinnace aboard a British man-of-war. Americans love humorous exaggeration. An American, discussing with a stranger the forty-five-storey building of the Singer Company in New York, said, "Yes, they are really getting too high now; in Chicago they have a building that has snow on the roof all the year round." However, the best of friends must part, and I left the firm's employ through a nephew of my friend, who did not care to argue. One night there was something special on—I think it was the night they had fireworks for the Princess Eulalia of Spain—and the firm wanted to keep running till 12 P.M. Just as I was leaving, this nephew came and asked me if I would stay on if he would allow me a full day's pay for the six hours. I agreed and stayed, but when Saturday came round I only received my regular wages. The nephew was standing outside the office, so I went up to him and spoke to him about it, and he denied having made me any such promise. He reached the office door just one jump in the lead, and all that saved him was the fact that they had a wire netting from the pay counter clear to the ceiling, which I could not get through. The old man, hearing the racket, came up and offered to pay me out of his own pocket; but I was young and independent, and would have none of it.

One rather amusing experience I had out at the fair-grounds before this occurred. At that time I had not quite forgotten the Hindustani learned during a year in India. I had just delivered some change at one of the fountains, and was taking a drink of ice-cream soda, when I overheard two gentlemen, who were also taking a drink, making comments, in Hindustani, on the good looks of the girl cashier. In fun I said, also in Hindustani, "Be careful what you say." I thought they would choke as they hastily swallowed their drinks and fled. It must have astonished them to find an American labourer in overalls who was able to understand and answer them in a language they naturally thought unknown over here.

Next I tried to get work in the grounds, and failed; and then began the hardest struggle for existence I have ever had. At the time I thought it a terrible experience, but I have realised since that the year I spent in Chicago has been worth more to me in education than all the years previous to it. It taught me the value of money; to curb my temper, even under the greatest provocation; to hang on to one job, no matter what it was, till I had another one better; and, last but not least (since I became an employer of labour), always to give a young, inexperienced lad a chance and see what is in him. I have in hundreds of places been met with the answer, "We only need experienced men," and have wondered how on earth a man was to get experience unless some one would give him a chance to start and learn. I met with much hardness, and also with exceptional kindness; and now that I have pulled through, I am glad that I went through the experience.

I am afraid I am getting long-winded over what we call "hard-luck" stories here, but it really seems a bad state of affairs that a man who is really willing to work, and is not particular what the work is, has actually to go hungry for the want of it. The greatest curse to the English name in the United States is a class of Englishmen who are known as "remittance-men." They are content to live on what they are able to get from home, and live as "gentlemen," but would be insulted if you asked them why they do not go to work. I have met hundreds of such men, who would tell you that the reason they do not work is that they cannot find work that a gentleman could do, and could not think of taking other work, as they have the family name in their keeping. They are the laughing-stock of the communities in which they live.

CHAPTER VI

Looking for Work—An Englishman's Disadvantages—Addressing Envelopes—Running a Lift—Bogus Advertisements—Various Jobs.

DURING the winter of 1892–93 and the spring of 1893, thousands of men had flocked to Chicago from all parts of the United States, owing to the reports of work and good wages, and the expectation of a boom in the city in consequence of the Fair. Building operations in the fair-grounds, men necessary to instal the machinery and the exhibits, Columbian Guards, and the employees of the concessionaires, absorbed thousands of them; and thousands more were absorbed outside the fair-grounds in rushing up the hotels, saloons, &c.; but still they came. After the Fair was once in full swing, instead of there being employment for more, thousands were being turned off daily. Besides, the Fair was not turning out the financial success that had been expected. Added to the thousands who came to the city looking for work were other thousands who had only come to see the Fair, but, getting "busted," had to remain and look for work to earn money to get home. Then, to make matters worse, in the summer and fall of 1893 came the tremendous business depression and panic all over the United States, which broke many banks and hundreds of business men in Chicago and elsewhere. Even in the spring and early summer we felt the forerunner of this.

I have to relate all this in order to explain the conditions I stepped into, and the reason why the struggle was exceptional at that time for any one, and more especially for a young married Englishman whose training-ground had been an English public school. The latter, as I will explain later, is the very poorest training that a man could have to meet American conditions, and in many ways it inculcates ideas and ideals that militate against one's chances—at least, in one's earlier struggles. I first tried to secure office work, but found that I, with absolutely no business training, was in competition with book-keepers and stenographers of fifteen and twenty years' experience, who were also out of jobs; besides, these men were Americans, and knew all the ropes thoroughly. I have sat or stood (more often the latter) for two hours in a hall in company with 150 or 200 men all come after *one* vacancy. Any one who has not been through the mill in dire need of work can hardly imagine the agony one feels when a callous office-boy comes in from the sanctum, and with a grin hangs up a sign, "Position filled." I used to get up before 5 A.M. to buy the early morning papers, rush home to make a list of the vacancies I thought I could fill and the hour at which application had to be made. Often two or three advertisements would name the same hour, and I would have to choose between them, but always with the feeling that I had picked the wrong one. To some places I could walk, but as Chicago is a huge town, I had to take cars to many of them, and car-fare eats up money. It was certainly disheartening to go day after day to five or six places and see the sign without even having a chance to talk to the "boss"; but it was just as bad when I did see him, as the invariable answer was, "I need experienced men only. Yes, I dare say you could do the work, but we cannot afford to take chances. Good-bye."

Finally, I got a job at a wholesale drygoods (clothing) house, addressing envelopes. I worked hard, as I did not dare to lose even this temporary employment, and luckily, on the third day, attracted the attention of one of the heads, who transferred me to the permanent office force at $10 per week. This, though small pay, was at least permanent till I could find something better or could get a rise, and I worked hard to make up for my other deficiencies. I had been there working about ten days, when one night on reaching home I received a note from an influential friend connected with the New York Biscuit Company (Chicago branch), that I could get a position paying $15 per week by applying to the superintendent at the factory the next morning at 9 A.M., and intimating that the superintendent had said that the position would only remain open till then. On reaching the office the next morning, I applied for leave for an hour, from nine till ten, and was refused. I was now in a quandary to throw up a job I held, paying $10, for another paying $15, but which I was not sure that I could fill, as I did not know of what the work consisted. I decided to take the chance, and went to the cashier to ask for my money. He told me, "The firm pays by the week, and if you do not stay out the week you get nothing." I was now in for it; so I hurried over to the biscuit factory, and handed my friend's note to the superintendent, who told me the job was to run the freight elevator. This, though better than nothing, was not what I had been expecting, and it was somewhat of a blow. I went to work at noon, and found out that the elevator-man was the intermediary between surly teamsters on the ground floor and cursing foremen on all the other floors. I had not my full strength then, being under twenty, and found it taxed every ounce that was in me to handle bales of wrapping-paper weighing 200 lbs., which I had to load on to and unload from my elevator, also great hogsheads of lard weighing 800 lbs. Cases of eggs were easy, and barrels of flour, but the paper, lard, and molasses were terrible, and I found they used the same password on every floor, "Hurry up!" After four days I found my hands and back in such a condition that I could not keep up with the freight, and so, in spite of my dread of again having to hunt work, I resigned. The superintendent treated me very well, saying how sorry he was they had no other vacancy to give me, and paid me up.

There is a class of brutes in the States, and possibly in other places, who live off the poor desperately in need of a job; and it must pay well, from the offices they are able to keep up and the advertising they do. They advertise for, say, painters at $3 per day, or it may be workers in crayon to enlarge photos. When you apply, you find out that there is still a vacancy, that the work is very simple, but, in order to secure the position, you must buy your paint-brushes and paints from them for $5 or more, or it may be crayons at the same price or a greater one. If you are desperate, and must have work before your funds all run out, you buy, using your last few dollars for the purpose. If you have not quite the amount they demand, they will tell you that in your special case they will let you have it for the few cents less you may have, as they hate to let any one escape them. After buying your outfit they may possibly give you work (provided they see you have money still left) for an hour or so, when you will be told you are not up to the standard, but that they can teach you their method for another $20 or so; and so it goes on till they have bled you. This game is worked in a hundred different ways, but the result is always the same, and you are out from $5 to $25, according to how much money or sense you have; and you will have left to show for your money perhaps 50 cents' worth of crayons. It is a wonder to me that such men are not killed more often than they are by some poor, desperate devil who sees nothing but suicide before him, but wants to pay his debts before he goes. I was lucky enough to keep out of their clutches through being warned, but wasted much time in answering their advertisements, which are wonderfully plausible. I have often wondered why Carnegie and some other of the wealthy, who are trying to give their surplus wealth away for the good of humanity, do not start some sort of national labour bureau to bring the worker and the work together, charging a small fee and giving honest treatment. Surely this would do almost as much good as libraries, &c., and would save many a young girl from a life of shame, and honest young fellows from suicide or crime.

My next job was as insurance solicitor (tout), but I could not make car-fare at it. Then I sold sewing machines, or rather tried to, but got tired of having the dog set on me. I then got a berth as city salesman for a wholesale grocery house, and did fairly well for a while; but the quality of the goods with which they filled the orders was so inferior to the samples that I could never get a second order in the same store. My next job was with a drug manufacturer as demonstrator—that is, I had a chair and a table, which I moved weekly from one large store to another in different parts of the city, and gave out samples (of root-beer and different essences) and advertising matter, and explained all about the merits of our particular goods, and tried to answer all the fool questions put to me. The reason of all this was that we sold our goods to those stores under a guarantee that we would advertise them till we had created a demand for them. After some weeks of this I was put out on the street as city salesman, and did well, making

$15 per week and expenses. The head of the firm, a "Yankee" from Hartford, Conn., was one of the best men I ever worked for, and the kindest. The first week I handed him a detailed account of my expenses he told me, "I only want the total, not the items. A dishonest man cannot work for me, and an honest man I trust." Then, when he had looked over it, he saw I had lunches down at 15 cents (7½d.), and he said, "My employees do not have to eat 15-cent lunches. Get yourself decent meals hereafter." For men such as this it is a pleasure to work, and they lose nothing by their kindness.

CHAPTER VII

Life under Difficulties—Drawbacks of a Public-school Training—Hints on Emigration—Pneumonia—Unemployment in Chicago, 1893.

Do not imagine from what I have just written that I stepped from one of these positions into another. Far from it; there are successive gaps between filled with fruitless searching after work. In one thing I was very lucky: two of my wife's brothers came to Chicago at the same time she and I did, and we all helped one another. When in need, one could always get meals from the others, if they had work; and for this reason none of us starved, though we ate slim meals occasionally. I remember, one evening, one of the boys came up to our room to go out and sup with us (we ate at a restaurant), whereas my wife and I had been waiting for him to come home, so that we could get him to take *us* out! I had a little bank in which I had been putting pennies for a rainy day, and we decided to break it open, as the rainy day had arrived. It had, if I remember right, 78 cents in it; and there came the rub—none of us wanted to hand the waiter 78 copper cents for the supper, so it had to be changed into silver, and none of us wanted to do the changing. At last we put the job on my wife, as we were two to one against her.

My wife was the life of the whole lot of us boys, for boys we all were. She it was who cheered us and kept heart in us during bad times, and during one very bad time she tided me over by getting a position as cashier at a soda-fountain, till I was on my feet again.

We had our amusements too, and occasionally went to the theatre, in the peanut gallery, and sometimes I got passes from an actor friend of mine. There was a piano in our boarding-house, where a mob of about a dozen of us would congregate in the evenings and have music, singing, and story-telling. It was quite a conglomeration. There were two old-maid sisters, teachers in the Chicago High School, who could recite; a young fellow who was singing tenor in the "chorus" of Kiralfy's America Company at the Auditorium (he could parody anything, had a very fine voice, and was a natural comedian); then there was an engraver in Lyon and Healy's piano factory, who played well; also an elderly man, who taught music on the guitar and banjo, and played divinely on the latter; a stock-broker's clerk, my wife, her two brothers, and myself, who were all strong on choruses; and others whom I forget. When times were good, and we could buy a jug of beer and had plenty of tobacco, that house used to be a scene of much revelry.

Chicago, however, is not like London, where you can find so many places to see and amuse yourself without cost. Excepting the parks one has to pay to go anywhere, either to the museum or picture gallery, and even the parks cost car-fare. For, as I have said before, Chicago is a huge city. When I worked at the fair-grounds I lived on the west side, and went eight miles to my work and back every day.

I have said that an English public-school education was a poor training for a man who had to make a living in the United States—at least, at the start. I do not mean, of course, a man who has a finished education and could enter one of the professions, but I mean for a lad who comes of good family, who has failed for the army or navy, who is not studious, but who is not necessarily an idiot. Such a lad gets ideas in an English public school—at least, it was so in my school—both from the masters and from his comrades, that when he grows up there are only a few things a gentleman can do and not lose caste. He must not be a "counter-jumper" or take any menial position. A farmer or rancher is correct form, and even "help" on either is within the pale. But it is better to live as a gentleman supported by relatives than to "disgrace" them by earning one's own support in any "low" position. Then, again, the education one receives is not practical for the necessities of life here. Here one needs book-keeping instead of Greek, shorthand and typewriting instead of Latin, and the study of modern business methods instead of ancient history. All these things, of course, are good in their place, but I am speaking solely of the boy who finally has to come to the States to make his way in competition with men who are thoroughly up-to-date in all these things.

Once in Chicago I saw an advertisement for a coachman at $60 per month and cottage. It was a bonanza. I was in great need of work at the time, and so applied for the position; but, unfortunately, all the letters of recommendation I could show were from the president of the Agricultural College at Guelph, the rector of my church there, and my certificate of the Simla Veterinary Course, all of which told the tale of my being gentle-born and not of the coachman class. The advertiser was an Englishman and a large broker on the Stock Exchange, and though he acknowledged that I could fill the place, and from my veterinary knowledge would be of more value to him than an ordinary coachman, he refused me the job solely on the ground that I was a gentleman, and he could not employ such in a menial position. I explained that I was married and badly needed work, and that I was not likely to presume, but would give him good and honest work. He said he was sorry, but it would make him uncomfortable to have a gentleman working for him in a "menial position"; and that was all I could get out of him.

In those days I was ashamed to write and tell my friends what I was doing for a living; but as I grew older and got a broader view of things, I got over that false pride, and now am not ashamed that I have been able to earn an honest living by any and all kinds of work. Phil May's reproof of this false pride is amusing. He once, during his early struggles, secured a job in a small second-class restaurant as waiter. A friend one day recognised him, and said, "My heavens, Phil, have you fallen to this?" May replied, "Why, yes, my friend, I *work* here; but, thank God, I haven't fallen so far as to have to *eat* here." Surely a man can remain a gentleman no matter what he has to do to earn a living.

If I had a friend in England who had sons he was forced to send to the United States to make their way, I would, by the light of my own experience, advise him to send the boy over here when he was fourteen or fifteen years of age, and—unless the father could also come here to live—put him under the care of some friend or some reputable lawyer. If the boy's bent were agriculture, send him to the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, which is about the best institution of its kind on the continent. Pay his board, tuition, and clothing bills, but let him earn his own spending money, which he can easily do. If his bent is mechanical, get him in as apprentice with the Allis-Chalmers Company (mining machinery manufacturers in Chicago), and after he has passed out in four years of hard work, learning practically every branch of the building of machinery, send him to Columbia University to take the mechanical engineers' course of three years. If the latter cannot be afforded, the former will be sufficient for a bright lad who is willing to study a little by himself. If his bent is mercantile, send him to a good business college in New York or Chicago, to learn shorthand, typewriting, book-keeping, and general business methods, and after he has passed through, either let him start out and earn his own living—not getting a penny from home except in the case of sickness, but not when out of work—or else get him in as clerk or office-boy into the particular business he is afterwards to follow. A little hard times hurts no one, though the boy should be carefully watched and not allowed to get into serious trouble. Of course, this kind of education does not put on a very fine polish, but it makes a capable man; and if the boy has been well trained till he is fourteen, there is little fear of his going wrong, much less fear than if he has too much money. After this course for a few years, he should be a practical business man, and well capable of handling his own capital, either to start for himself or to buy an interest in the business in which he has been working.

I worked as drug salesman for some time, when I had the misfortune to catch a very bad cold, which turned into pneumonia. It was about four weeks before I could walk again. My wife and the boys pulled me through in spite of the doctor, who said, "Wire for his people." Some cousins of my wife, who farmed near Iowa City, invited us to come and stay with them till I was strong again, and so as soon as I could toddle we went to them.

I had never written home what my life in Chicago was, as, having married so young contrary to my people's wishes, I was determined to make my living, if possible, without aid. But when the doctor told my wife that my days were over, she wired Mr. Bole in New York to cable home, and he sent her funds to meet expenses and to take us both to Iowa City.

Chicago is, I believe, the coldest city in America in the winter, and the hottest in summer, but a splendid business town, with large opportunities for a young man. And when I hear men tell me that they can't get a job and have to beg, it makes me hostile; for I know that a healthy single man need never go hungry if he is willing to work, though he may not always get the kind of job he fancies. This is, of course, during ordinary times. The fall and winter of 1893 were exceptional, for when I left Chicago in November of that year it was estimated that there were 200,000 men out of employment in a city which had a normal population of about one million and a quarter, though it was much inflated at the time. The churches were opened for them to sleep in, and soup kitchens established all over the city that winter, and the police and railroad men bothered no one who chose to leave town in a "side-door Pullman" (baggage wagon), as they were only too glad to see the last of them. There was some little rioting, but, on the whole, they were all honest labourers out of a job, and only seeking food. For this they were willing to work, and the city put enormous gangs to work cleaning snow off the streets, so that the feeding, &c., should not look like charity.

Of course this attitude of the railway was exceptional. Stowaways, when discovered, are generally thrown out promptly. They are accustomed to it, so seldom come to harm. Out West, freight trainsmen are sometimes very civil in picking up persons who "flag" them on the prairie. They will not, however, always stop to "set-down," but at ordinary "freight" pace on the prairie lines it is possible to jump without affording the trainsmen the fun of somersaults.

CHAPTER VIII

Hard Times—Health restored—Rabbit-catching—Hunting in Iowa—A Gentleman Tramp—The Hobo Business—Free Travelling.

IT was certainly a hard struggle which ended in my breakdown in Chicago and going to Iowa, but I have never regretted going through it. I got small helps—first and last $150—and to be sure they came at opportune times. For instance, one of the remittances came just after the incident I mentioned about the penny saving-bank. We never starved, but I have eaten free lunches once in a while—that is, a good lunch you can get in most saloons, with a glass of beer, which you purchase for 5 cents.

I have borne these things in mind since I became an employer, and I can feel for poor fellows who are clamouring for work; for man must eat, and, if he is willing to work, he will have work, or some one will suffer. I have really once or twice had the thought flash through my mind to take my pistol and hold up the first man I met, if things got any worse than they were at the time. However, God has been very good to me, and I have always pulled through when things looked their blackest. It is in moments like this that one thinks of one's family, and would die rather than bring disgrace on them. How any man with experience such as I have had could deny the existence of a God is more than I can understand, and yet lots of them pretend to do so.

My wife's uncle had a farm a couple of miles from Iowa City; he had also a vineyard. The family consisted of himself, wife, and five children, all grown up. Most of their grapes they made into wine, of which they kept a liberal supply for home consumption, and the old man believed it to be a cure for everything. The first thing when we drove up to the door, he was there to welcome us with a jug of wine and some glasses. For the first month I was there it used to be, every couple of hours, "You are looking pale or tired; you must have a glass of wine," and, willy-nilly, I had to down a tumblerful, as he did not believe in wineglasses. I drank more wine in the three months we stayed at his house than I have ever drunk before or since in my life. Under this treatment, plenty of good food, and no worry, I was strong as a mule in no time. The boys were all great hunters, and, as work is very slack in wintertime on a farm, they had plenty of time to indulge themselves. At first I used to walk out about a mile and then go slowly home, but it was not long before I could carry my gun and keep up my end with any of them over ten or fifteen miles of heavy walking in the snow. My wife, too, bloomed out (she was much pulled down with looking after me), having nothing to do but eat and sleep and amuse herself. Here I was initiated into the method of catching a rabbit alive in the snow. In the winter, after a rabbit has fed, he hunts up a nice place to keep warm and take his siesta. His method is as follows: After reaching the neighbourhood where he wishes to camp, he will stop in his tracks, crouch, and take a prodigious leap off to one side or the other; this he will continue till he has made eight or ten such jumps and reaches the place he had in his mind, when he will burrow a hole in the snow parallel with the surface and only about a foot underneath it, coil up, and go to sleep. This jumping business is to throw any coyote or fox off the track, and makes it a hard job even for a man to track him. We would come to one of these tracks, follow it, and, when we came to the jumping-off place, look carefully for the place he landed, and so on to his hole. Now if the hole was very long and the snow loose, you generally had to get your rabbit with a gun as he bolted; but if there was a slight crust to the snow, and the hole fairly short, you quietly inserted your hand in the hole. Then with a rush you followed up the hole with your hand and arm, and you had the rabbit by the hind-legs before he could kick his way out. I have seen the boys catch half-a-dozen rabbits in succession in this way, and even got pretty good at it myself. It is quite exciting, and should you miss him, you still have a chance with your gun.

The hunting of small game round Iowa was very good—quail, rabbit, squirrels (red and black), and duck in the fall of the year. There was also excellent fishing to be had in the river, and splendid skating in the winter. We also had some luck with pole-cats, or skunks, as they are called, but skinning a skunk is worth all one gets for the hide. My uncle-in-law had a very fine colt, which had thrown all his boys, and when they found out I had broken horses on a ranch, they asked me to break him. I took him out into the deep snow, saddled and mounted him against his protests, but he could not do much in the way of bucking on account of the snow. After I had galloped him a mile or two through the drifts, he was as gentle as a cat, and I rode him back to the house. When I arrived, the boys were outside waiting for me; and to show them how quiet he was, I threw one leg over the horn of the saddle and joked them a little about their horsemanship. This was more than one of the boys could stand, so he threw a snowball at the horse from behind, which hit him on the inside of the flank. How I got my leg back into position I don't know, for things were lively for a minute; but I managed to stick to him, though I wrenched my leg pretty severely, so as to stop my hunting for a few days.

It was here I met my first genuine hobo (tramp) in a social way, though I have met a few of the same breed since. He was a young man about twenty-three years of age, the only son of a wealthy widow, who loved the road for the road's sake, though he would periodically come home for a breath of civilisation; and it was because of this I happened to meet him. His mother idolised him, and would have supplied him with all the money he needed to travel as a gentleman and see the world. But, as he used to tell me, it was such a relief to take off a white collar and dress like a tramp, besides the excitement and danger of the life. The only intimation his mother would get would be a note left on his pillow. He would walk down to the railroad water-tank some night dressed in his old clothes, and ride the truss-rods, or coupler, of the first freight which stopped for water, out of town to wherever it might happen to take him.

For he told me he never planned his route beforehand. So he travelled, seeing many towns, where he stopped as fancy took him, and kept moving till his money gave out; then he went to work till he had a few dollars saved up, and then on the move again. He would write to his mother from different places, and when finally tired would head home. He had been coal-passer on the "whale-back" at the Chicago Fair, had herded sheep in the west, been barkeeper, and a hundred other things. He would talk hobo-talk, so that I could hardly understand a word he said; but, withal, he was as well-dressed, well-mannered, well-educated a young fellow as you will meet anywhere in the West. I met him again five years later, when he had gone broke on a tramp, and had got a job as chainman on a railroad survey in Mexico.

This hobo business is not all cream, as my hobo friends have all told me. There is little fun in getting turned out of an empty box-car by an irate conductor at some water-tank twenty miles from the nearest town where you can get food; still less fun when, hanging on the ladder on the side of a box-car at night, trying to argue with a brakeman, he cuts short the argument by the simple expedient of stamping on your fingers, and you perforce have to take a wild jump off the moving train, hoping and praying that the landing may be soft. But in all this lies the fascination and excitement. Even when all goes well, and you are carefully laid out on a plank across the truss-rods under a car, the flying gravel and sand make travelling, when rapid, uncomfortable. There is also always the danger (when you travel without knowing your destination) of running into some large terminal and being arrested by the police. Still, there must be a huge fascination in the life to attract young fellows of this man's position in life. It is not the loafing, as hoboes of this description are ready to work when they are out of funds, and do not steal for a living as some tramps will do.

It is always, of course, a point of honour with railroad men not to let a hobo travel on their train unless he is willing to pay something, and this a hobo will never do unless in the direst extremity. I once was witness of a rather amusing thing at a little wayside station in West Texas. A freight pulled in while I was chatting with the station agent, and side-tracked to let the passenger train go by. When they stopped, besides the train crew three tramps got off, and when they first came in sight, the hind-brakeman and the station agent got into an argument as to where they had come from, the agent affirming that they had come in on the freight, and the brakeman sticking out that it was impossible, or he would have seen them, and that they must have walked. Finally, they each bet some money, handing it to me, and decided to leave the matter with the tramps. When the latter came up, the brakeman asked them how they had come in, and one of them answered they "had come in on the train, and intended going out on it." This answer, coming on top of the fact that he had lost the bet, so angered the brakeman that he started in to lick the tramp spokesman; but to our amusement and delight the tramp did him up brown. He was mad as a wet hen; and the last I saw of him, as the train pulled out, he was sitting on top of the caboose (guard's van) threatening to kill the first tramp who got on the train. But what he had not seen, which added to our amusement, was the three tramps climb into an empty box-car before the train started.

Some of these tramps are really "bad-men," and will kill a trainman before they allow themselves to be ditched; but most of them are either like my hobo friend, or are working men out of employment and cash, moving to where work is more plentiful. Most freight conductors carry these last for a small sum (contrary to railroad regulations), and I have seen twenty or thirty cotton-pickers in one empty car on their way to the cotton-fields. If you can convince the conductor that you are really destitute and hunting work, more likely than not he will not only carry you free, but feed you on the road as well. I have heard of this being done in many cases.

CHAPTER IX

Toronto—An Interest in a Mine—The Railway Strike of 1894—Stranded at La Junta, Colorado—Strike Incidents—Troops called out.

THIS young hobo friend of mine was about the smoothest card-sharp I ever came across. He never played for money, as a man does not live long cheating at cards in the west or south. He could deal from any part of the pack of cards, and could shuffle the cards into any position he wished. My wife's uncle considered himself a champion player, and one night this young fellow proposed to me that he and I should play the old man and one of his sons, and that we would not let them win one single game. We started about 8 P.M.; at 6 A.M. we were still playing, and had won every game.

My health was now all right again, and I had no excuse for further lingering. I had written to Mr. Townsley in Toronto, to whom I had a letter of introduction, asking him about work. He wrote back inviting us to stay with him, and said he could get me a position in the Canadian Public Works Department. So off we started for Toronto.

I found the Townsleys very hospitable, but the promised job did not materialise. Mr. Townsley was a general broker, buying and selling anything on which he could make a profit, and into every sort of scheme. He was also financing an inventor who could invent more useless things of rare mechanical ingenuity than any man I ever came across.

Mr. Townsley was much interested in a mine in British Columbia; he had not, however, the necessary funds to carry it through alone, and there was another gentleman, a Mr. Sayers, interested with him. On Mr. Townsley's suggestion I wrote for funds to buy an interest, and also went down to Guelph to see a college chum of mine who had recently fallen heir to a small fortune. When the money arrived I bought an interest, and Cursin, my Guelph friend, invested some $11,000.

Meanwhile, however, I had received a letter from my friend Bole in New York advising me to go slow. It was decided that I should go and take a look at the mine, and take out samples myself, and have them assayed. Mr. Townsley and the lawyer Sayers thought they would go too, as they wished to see personally the work that was being done at the mine. I was to go on ahead to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I was to go up into the Espinola Valley to look at a Bucyrus dredge, at work there on a placer field, that Mr. Townsley and some associates were thinking of buying if it turned out all right. There Townsley and Sayers were to join me later.

Everything went well till I reached La Junta, Colorado. Here, at the division terminus, the engineer and fireman refused to go on, as the great railroad strike of 1894 was in progress; and there our train and six others were stuck for ten days. The railway company issued us meal-tickets free, and we ate at the station restaurant. We certainly kept them busy, as they had to serve meals in three detachments, there being so many of us that there was not the necessary seating accommodation; for, besides the passengers, there were some 350 deputy United States marshals guarding the trains and the mails, which were stacked up in a mountain on the platform. At night it was like war times, for when you stepped out of your car you were challenged at every turn by pickets, and had to show your railroad tickets. The strikers did not try to molest any one or anything at first, but instead gave dances and entertainments in their lodge hall to raise funds to help their cause. To these the passengers used to go, as they were glad to break the monotony of sitting in the cars reading and playing cards all day.

But one night there was a terrific thunderstorm, such as they have in Colorado, and in the morning it was found that the strikers had been busy; for they had cut off the rubber hose connections of the air-brakes from every car, while our noble guards were hunting cover from the rain. These guards were a queer conglomeration, and had the greatest assortment of weapons I ever saw—from the 32-calibre bulldog to the 45-calibre frontier sixshooter with its 7-inch barrel, from the sawed-off double-barrelled shot-gun to the latest thing in pump-guns. Most of the men were college students out for excitement, and glad to earn something at the same time during the long vacation; but there was a sprinkling of Western gun-men amongst them.

At Trinidad, a little farther down the line, the strikers turned some loaded coal-cars loose down the long incline through the tunnel. Luckily, the railroad officials got wind of it, and were able to throw a switch and ditch the runaway cars before they had a chance to crash into the passenger trains which were held up there. When news of this reached La Junta, 150 deputy marshals were put aboard a train and run down to Trinidad, officials acting as firemen and engineer. They were a noble band of bad-men when they started out, telling us what they would do to the strikers; but it was a sorry-looking crew that returned next morning minus their guns. The strikers at Trinidad had got news of their coming, and, reinforced by some miners from Cripple Creek, they, some 2000 strong, surrounded the train of deputies when it arrived, disarmed them, but allowed them to return to La Junta unhurt. If there had not been a sprinkling of older heads amongst the deputies, who had sense enough to know that they had bitten off more than they could chew, there would have been some shooting, and probably a massacre.

This victory, however, was the finish of the fight in Colorado; for when it was discovered that deputy marshals could not handle the situation and give the necessary protection to the mails, two companies of United States regulars were sent down from Denver to La Junta, and from there we all moved on together to Trinidad, where, after a delay of one day, we went on through to our destinations, and the strike was broken.

When we reached Trinidad, the platform was covered with strikers and sympathisers, and many of us got off the cars or went to points of vantage to see the fun. The major commanding the troops detrained his men, and lined them up on the platform. He made a little speech to the strikers and passengers on the platform, saying he had to have the platform clear, and would give so many minutes for every one to clear out; and as he could not distinguish between passengers and strikers, all the former must get back into their cars, or they would be treated as strikers. At the end of the time stated he closed his watch, put it in his pocket, and the fun began. The soldiers, using the butts of their rifles as tampers, went up and down the line dropping them on people's toes, and the platform was clear in a few minutes. Not a shot was fired, as the strikers knew better than to tackle the regulars, though they outnumbered them ten to one.

The next day we went on to Lamy, where I took the train to Santa Fe, and from there on to Espinola. While we were tied up at La Junta, there happened to be a poor woman, wife of one of the strikers, who was travelling on a pass, and in consequence the railway company refused to issue her a meal-ticket, more especially as her husband was one of the strikers living in Trinidad. As soon as the local lodge heard of the matter, and that she was without funds, they took her over to their hall, fed her, and, hiring a buggy, took her overland to Trinidad.

The Bucyrus dredging operations turned out a fiasco; for, though the gold is there, and probably millions of it, the sand running from 25 cents to 75 cents per cubic yard, it is fine flake gold, so fine and thin that it just floated on the water over the amalgam tables, and the plates caught nothing.

I stayed there about three weeks, and then, being joined by Townsley and Sayers, we went on to San Francisco. There we took boat to Vancouver and on to Golden over the Canadian Pacific Railroad, the trip being well worth many days' travel; but one may read all this in the guide-books issued by the Canadian Pacific Railway. From Golden we had to make arrangements for pack and riding animals to take us over to the mines. a distance of about eighty-five miles.

CHAPTER X

Golden—Pack-horse Difficulties—Camping out—Prospecting in British Columbia—On an Asphaltum Mine in Texas.

At that time (1894) Golden consisted of three frame hotels, a smelter, post-office, a sawmill, the usual quota of saloons and dance-halls, and probably fifteen houses. Still, all the land was staked out into town lots and streets, and lots were valued at $250 up. I met a friend a short time ago who had just come from there, and he told me it was now a city of about 3000 people. It had three churches, a baseball club, chamber of commerce, mayor, aldermen, and all the appurtenances of civilisation.

We were met in Golden by Mr. Townsley's younger brother, who had been out at the mines overseeing the work. We hired seven horses—four to ride, and three to pack—and started off. I wanted to take along a rifle I had borrowed, but was voted down on the ground that if I took the rifle I should want to hunt, and this was solely a business expedition. I also wanted to take along a skilled packer to look after the horses, but I was again voted down, on the score that it was a needless expense, and that there were enough able-bodied men in the crowd to do all that was needed. I was completely ignorant about packing, and knew it, but the rest of the party were blissfully ignorant of even their ignorance. After this second defeat I swore I would only go along as passenger, and would not be in any way held responsible for the lack of the necessaries I had wished to take along, nor would I assist in the packing, all of which was agreed to; and so the rest of the trip was pure enjoyment to me, whatever it was to the others.

We arrived at Carbonate landing the first night, over level roads, without any mishaps, about twenty miles by land, and thirty-two by water, from Golden. But here we struck off into prospectors' trails up the mountains. They adjusted the packs for us at the hotel before we started, and we all stood around to see how it was done, and thought we knew all about it and could tie a diamond hitch with any one. The first afternoon after leaving the landing we saw a bear down in the valley below us, and there was much regret that we had not brought the rifle. That night we camped at a deserted hut, and everybody was tired; for twenty-five miles' riding behind pack-animals at a walk in the hills is tiring work. The next morning we repacked and started off, but had not gone a mile when we saw another bear—and more regrets.

There seemed to be something lacking in our knowledge about packing, for every few miles the packs would slide round underneath the horses' bellies. Luckily the horses were quiet, and really seemed quite accustomed to having packs do this, for they would stop at once and commence eating till some one came and readjusted the load. The work fell on the two Townsleys, who were riding one in front and one behind the pack-animals; and amidst much cussing and reviling of one another, the horses, the packs, and everything connected with the expedition, they would get the packs back, and we would travel a few more miles, when the same scene would be repeated. On one occasion I offered the suggestion that they should put the pack-saddle on top and hang the goods underneath, but they seemed to take it too seriously. The job was not so easy as it looks on paper, as the trail was narrow, and the cliffs very steep in case a man slipped; so each new halt called forth choicer language than had been used at the last, and what one could not think of the other said.

We camped out the second night on a large plateau, but as poor Sayers could not sleep himself, he annoyed the rest of us by gathering wood all night and keeping up an enormous fire. The bears and coyotes seemed to have got on his nerves, also portions of his anatomy had acquired saddle-galls. The next day we intended making the mine, but it took hard and late riding to do it, owing to the constant stops to fix packs, which seemed to be harder to handle each time they were unloaded. The only thing that disturbed my complete enjoyment was that I could not enjoy a hearty laugh in peace, as relations were beginning to get strained. Whenever they had breath left over from cussing the pack and the horse, they cussed me, simply because I suggested that they should not undress the pack-animals at night. However, by riding late, we made the mine-camp that night, and none of us were sorry to reach it.

Next morning, bright and early, we started over to see the mine, which was about half a mile from the camp. Considerable work had been done. Two tunnels had been driven at right angles to one another—one about 130 feet long and the other about 50 feet—besides three vertical shafts, or prospect holes, on different parts of the ledge. About a mile above the mine site there was a good-sized glacier, from the foot of which ran quite a respectable stream of water, which could be utilised for water-power by installing a turbine and dynamo.

To get from the camp to the mine we had to cross a ravine filled with frozen snow with a pitch of about 45°, and across this a narrow path about 16 inches wide had been cut. Here Sayers baulked, until he found that there was absolutely no other way to get across, when he gave in. It turned out that he had one glass eye (which I had not known till then), and so, being blind in one eye and lame in the other (he wore glasses), he could not see very well, poor fellow.

Coming back, we decided to go another way to look at a new outcrop that had been discovered. This brought us above the camp, and we could, by scrambling down a pretty steep cliff, save a long walk round. We got a rope round Sayers, which was held by a man above him, and with another man below to place his feet, we managed to get him down, though he protested strongly. This was the first and last trip Sayers took with us, as he decided he was not cut out for mountaineering; and he was at least convinced that there was a mine, which was all he had come to see.

We stayed about a week; then I collected my samples, and we started back for Golden. On the second day, as we were coming round a bend, we ran full into a she-bear and two half-grown cubs. She certainly looked mean as she barred our way, while the cubs fled up the hillside. I told Sayers I was going to take a shot at her with my revolver (of which I had not really the least intention), and he nearly died of fright. I should not have felt like joking had I not known that the bear would have to eat Sayers before it could begin on me.

We got down to Carbonate landing without mishap, and there, as we were all heartily sick of riding Indian file, we sent our horses in with a man from the hotel, and, getting a boat, we rowed down to Golden, thirty-two miles, in something like three hours, assisted by a current like a mill-race. Here I sorted out my samples, and shipping half to Vancouver for assay, I brought the rest back with me to Toronto for the same purpose. We had bought the property—part cash and part time-notes—but, owing to bad management, and, I am afraid, considerable crooked work, our funds ran out and we could not meet payments. I went to every friend I had in Guelph and Toronto and tried to borrow money to tide us over, and Townsley did the same, as we were preparing to float a company on the good reports of the mining engineers and the different assays I had had made. But we were a year or two too early, as no one would touch West Kootenay mines or advance a dollar on them. Later on, every one was scrambling to buy stock in any hole in the ground up there, and some of the very men who refused me in 1894 sank thousands in 1895 and 1896 in worthless prospects. The end of it was we lost the mine, which was afterwards taken up by wealthy Hamilton men, who are making money out of it to-day. I believe, however, if it had been decently and honestly managed we might have just scraped through.

I returned to Guelph, broke and disgusted, and tried to get something to do, but did not succeed that winter. In the spring of 1895 I received a letter from Bole in New York, saying he was interested in developing an asphaltum mine in Texas, and if I wished I could get work there. But I should have to start at the bottom as a labourer and work my way up, if I had it in me. He was very sore at my not taking his advice in regard to the mine. My wife's health needed my remaining a few weeks longer, if possible, but I was told that I could not expect the offer to remain open. So, on the 12th of April, with a heavy heart I started off for Texas to make another effort to recoup my fortunes and make a living for my family. My friend, Cursin of Guelph, was just starting on a trip to Mexico, and we decided to travel together. I arrived in San Antonio, and took my letter of introduction to the company's office. There I was duly hired at

$1.25 (5s. 2½d.) per day, and told to report to the superintendent at Cline, 118 miles west of San Antonio. Young Cursin wanted to see the mine, and I got permission for him to go out and stay a couple of days. We arrived at Cline station, which is seven miles from the mines, but luckily a freight wagon of the company's was there, and I got the Mexicans to take our trunks, while Cursin and I walked. This Kootenay mine, above mentioned, is an example of the fact that the western states and provinces of America thrive on our "thousand-pounders." I put in £1000, and, as I have said, my English friend Cursin put in £2270; total, a present of £3270 to the Hamilton men! That is how the "thousand-pounders" nourish the West. Nor did the experience lead to much, for we both lost largely in subsequent investments.

CHAPTER XI

Cline—Bunk-houses—Work on a Rock-crusher—Mexican Dancing and Music.

IMMEDIATELY on arrival I reported to the superintendent in charge of the mines at Cline. He told me to go to the men's boarding-house and take any cot I found vacant, and also one for my friend.

The men's boarding-house was a two-storey frame building, of which the upper part was divided into three dormitories, and the lower into dining-room and kitchen. It was built so shakily that any one walking upstairs shook the whole building, and was so roughly put together that the wind whistled through the walls everywhere. It was terribly hot in summer, having only a light shingle roof; and when a norther was blowing, the cold was intense in the winter.

Besides this bunk-house there was an office building, above which the office force slept, a house for the chief engineer, one for the foreman, and one for the superintendent. The latter was an old Confederate colonel, once a slave-owner, who could not get over the slave-time idea that a "gentleman" should not work, and really must not be bothered with "details." I heard him say once, in answer to a query as to whether he had time to come and look at something: "Sir, I want you to understand that a gentleman always has time." He really had so much time that about a month after I arrived the company decided to give him an indefinite holiday. They tell a story in the south about the old Confederate veterans. A farmer, who was showing a visitor over his farm, made the remark that all of his hands were old soldiers. Said the visitor, "You don't tell me! Are any of them officers?" "Two of them," said the farmer. "That one there is a private, the man beyond is a major, and the man way yonder is a colonel." "Are they all good men?" asked the visitor. "Well, I ain't going to say anything against any man who fought for the South," said the farmer. "That private is a first-class man; but I've made up my mind to one thing—I ain't going to hire any brigadier-generals."

The Cline foreman was what is known as "poor white trash" in the south, and his failing was drink, in which his wife often joined him. When on these sprees they used to quarrel, and sometimes he threw her out of the house, and sometimes she threw him. But as he did not bother the superintendent with "details," the colonel overlooked these matters. Of course I found out all this later, but describe it here to give an idea of the class of men I worked under.

The mattresses and beds in the bunk-house were indescribable, and dust was everywhere, as the men were supposed to clean out their own rooms, and tired men of their stamp are not over-particular. I and Cursin spent a good part of the night fighting pests—winged and otherwise—but he was sleeping when I got up to get my breakfast before going to work at 6 A.M. the next morning. The food was good and plentiful, and the cook was good as camp cooks go.

I was ordered to go to one of the rock-crushers, of which there were two, and was handed a crowbar and sledge-hammer as the working tools of my trade. My work consisted of putting, unaided, forty-five tons of rock per day through the crusher. When the rock stuck, I had the bar to push it through with; and if the pieces were too big to go into the mouth of the crusher, I had the hammer to break them. The rock came up out of the pit in one-ton cars on an incline railway over my head, and were there dumped on to my platform, from which I had to pick them by hand and put them into the crusher mouth, which was about waist-high to me standing on the platform.

This extra and unnecessary work was simply owing to the bad design, or rather absence of any design, when the plant was laid out.

Across, on the other side of an endless chain-bucket elevator, was my shift-mate, who, owing to his having a 60-ton capacity crusher, had a Mexican assistant. Both crushers dumped into the same elevator, which carried the crushed rock up into an elevated bin, from which it was distributed to the extractors, which I shall describe later.

I worked all the morning, wondering what young Cursin could be doing with himself that he had not come round to visit me. But when I went to dinner, at noon, I found a note from him, saying he could stand it no longer, and he had gone off to catch the morning train.

I got out a pair of dogskin gloves from my trunk at noon, as my hands were nearly raw from the rough rock, and, as they were good English leather, by the time they wore out my hands were tough enough to stand the strain. By night I ached in every muscle, and I had cramp in my hands and wrists from the jar of the crusher, because, owing to lack of knowledge and unskilfulness, I would, when jamming down a rock, get the bar between the rock and the moving jaw, and get all the jar of the machine stiff-armed.

After a few days, however, I and my shift-mate got on friendly terms, and he would come over to show me how to do things right, so that the work became much easier. Each night I went to bed almost convinced that I could not stand more, and that I would have to quit in the morning. But in the morning I felt I could stand it one more day; and so it went on, all the time getting easier, till the idea of quitting went out of my mind entirely.

There were thirty odd white men working at the mine, and about one hundred Mexicans, when I first went there, and it was certainly a tough camp. There was a barbed-wire fence dividing the Mexican camp, which was known as "Mexico," from the rest of the buildings where the boarding-houses and the rest of the factory were. Over in Mexico they had a dance hall with a saloon attachment, and most of the men went over there when off duty. Fights were frequent and gun-plays occasional, but as a drunken man is seldom dangerous with a gun, no one got seriously hurt.

The man (an American) who ran the dance hall was the son of the man in charge of the company's freight wagons. He was called "Bud" Towser, and had the makings of a "bad-man" minus the "sand," or pluck. Sober, he was very quiet and generally polite, but drunk, or even partly so, he was very quarrelsome, and the Mexicans were in deadly fear of him; and most of the white men gave him the road.

One night two of the boys started a "rough-house" in his dance hall, thinking he had gone to town, but he had returned and was back in his room. When he burst out they made a bee-line for home, and as his gun barked after them in the dark they carried away most of the barbed-wire fence in their hurry.

On the 5th of May (one of the Mexican national holidays) I heard that there was to be a big dance about a mile from the mines, at a fence-rider's house, and I went up with some of the boys to look on. The dance was held on a big levelled piece of ground in front of the house, and round this piece, which was laid out for the dancing-floor (just mud wetted and well packed), there was a ring of posts on which were hung lamps and lanterns to light the dancers. Outside of this again were rows of benches for the dancers to rest on and for the onlookers; the side of the circle towards the house, however, was left open, so that there was a free passage to the refreshments, which were served inside, and consisted of tamales, enchiladas, and unlimited quantities of mescal. Mescal, or tequila, is spirit distilled from the sap of the large cactus known as the century plant in the States, and called *maguey* by the Mexicans.

It was a great surprise to me to see how gracefully these Mexican labourers danced; in spite of the fact that they were dancing on a mud floor and wearing heavy work shoes. Waltzing seemed the favourite, though occasionally they danced Mexican dances. The music was furnished by a string band—all the members of which were labourers in the mines—and was remarkably good. The whole scene was one to be remembered for years. The bright colours of the girls' dresses, the young men dressed in their Sunday best, with silver-plated buttons on their short jackets and down the outside seam of their tight-fitting trousers, their bright-coloured sashes and enormous felt hats, with which they reserved their partners' seats while dancing; the ring of lamps, and the circle of spectators blanketed like Indians; the background of oak and mesquite; the cry of the whip-poor-will mixing occasionally with the plaintive wail of the violin, while from the surrounding hills the coyotes joined in chorus.

A young Mexican, when he asks a girl to dance, comes up, hat in hand, to make his request, and if it is granted lays his hat in her seat to hold it for her. The minute the dance is over he brings her right back to her seat, picks up his hat and retires. There are no cozy corners, and no talking and walking about, the etiquette being very strict, even amongst the labouring classes.

Nearly all Mexican music is sad, but very beautiful, and they all seem to be born musicians. I have seldom met in Texas a Mexican who could not sing or play on some musical instrument, if it were only a mouth-organ. Their singing I cannot admire, at least that of the men. Their main object seems to be to sing in as high-pitched a tenor voice as they can accomplish, and as slowly as possible. They seem to have only two kinds of songs: either very mournful—sung slowly; or very vulgar—sung very rapidly. Of course, all the above only applies to the Peon, or labouring class.

CHAPTER XII

Trouble at the Dance—A New Superintendent—Shots in the dark—Arrest of Bud—With a Surveying Party.

I WAS absorbed in the beauty and strangeness of the scene when suddenly the peacefulness was broken by the "bang-bang" of a pistol, almost in our ears. Everybody jumped, but it was only a young Mexican, who had been "turned down" by his girl, and, having loaded up on mescal, was amusing himself by trying to stampede the crowd. Unfortunately, however, there were other young fellows in the crowd, back of the benches, who, happening to be in the same predicament, decided to assist him, and soon there was "bang-banging" all around the outer circle.

There was a Mexican deputy-sheriff on the ground to keep order, who, when things were getting pretty lively, got up on a stump and made a short speech.

He begged the young fellows to keep quiet, as things had gone as far as decency would permit, and said he would have to arrest the next man who fired a gun. While he was speaking a young Mexican, with more mescal than brains in his head, crept up behind him and fired off his pistol almost in his ear. The deputy turned like a flash, and before the young fellow could use his gun again he dived under his extended arm, caught him by the throat and wrist, pinned him to the ground and took his gun away from him. The minute the deputy had his prisoner down half a dozen young Mexicans ran up to rescue him, but the host and the deputy's two half-brothers ran to his assistance, and for a minute or two things looked bad. I beat a hasty retreat behind a convenient oak-tree from whence I could observe progress in safety. There was a young German lad at the mines who stood over six feet, and weighed close on 200 lbs., and was "Muy bravo" with his fists. Just as I reached the shelter of my friendly tree he came dashing by me, saying, "Let me in to this! Let me in!" as if I were trying to keep him out. As he ran up to the crowd some one stuck a "Colt's Frontier 45" under his nose, and he literally fell out backwards.

The determined attitude of the deputy and his friends stopped the trouble, though the dance was broken up. But as the crowd was moving away and the deputy was taking off his prisoner, Padilla, one of his half-brothers, gave a yell and clapped his hands to his stomach. Some one had taken his revenge, as Padilla had a cut which extended from his left hip almost to his right lower ribs, done from behind; the man who did it was never discovered. They carried him back to camp, and within a month he was back at his old job, running the car-hoist out of the mine.

Of course this kind of business was not conducive to good work, and so, in May 1895, a little more than a month after I started work, the new superintendent arrived, bringing with him a new foreman and a shipping clerk. The new superintendent was exactly the opposite of the colonel. He was a short, heavily built Northerner, born in Nantucket. "Details," so repugnant to the colonel, were just what he was after, and he did not take kindly to drinking and dance halls on the company's property. He put a stop to the dance hall, and no liquor of any kind was allowed on the company's land, which comprised 27,000 acres. He caused the sheriff of Uvalde County to appoint him as deputy, so that he could enforce his own orders, and the place began to quiet down.

As the company had no house to give me, I got funds from home to build a three-roomed house. I bought some furniture from the company, and sending for my wife and boy we started housekeeping in a small way. Meanwhile I had been changed from the crusher to fireman on the three stationary boilers.

It was promotion in so far as it was considered to need more skill, but it only carried with it harder work and no higher pay. It was terrible work during the months of June, July, and part of August, under a Texas sun, firing three 80 H.P. boilers with mesquite wood. There was no cover over the boilers, and the fireman stood out in the open with the heat of the sun on his back, and the heat of the fires in his face whenever he opened a fire-door to put in wood. Here I first found out what was meant by the saying, "A man does not know what heat is till he shivers from it." I had always thought this a foolish thing until I found out that a man can actually get so heated that he has cold chills run over him till he shivers. The only relief we could get was to go under the water-tank between times, while the steam held, and then before starting out douse our heads under the tap. I had two Mexican assistants to wheel wood from the pile to the boiler, and to wheel away the ashes. The reason there was no shed over the boilers was simply bad management and bad plans; later on all this was changed.

One night in July my wife, the boy, and I were sitting out on the front porch of my house trying to keep cool, when "whee-whee," two bullets came over the house. I could not imagine what was the trouble, but hustled them into the house, got my shot-gun, and went to investigate. As I came down the hill I could hear voices in altercation down at the stable, and when I reached it I found the elder Towser trying to take a rifle away from Bud, who, it seems, was drunk, and had been trying to shoot out the lights on our porch. I was mad enough to have given him both barrels, but the old man talked me out of it. Later on, the same evening, after taking a few more drinks from his private stock, he went over to Mexico and, getting angry with a Mexican, took a few shots at him, but luckily missed, and then he started home again. Meanwhile, Mr. Brooks, the superintendent, had been notified that Bud was on the rampage, and started out to find him. He met Bud on his way home from Mexico, and said, "Bud, I want your pistol, and you are under arrest." Bud promptly and forcibly refused. Brooks said, "Bud, if I don't have that gun in a couple of minutes, I shall have to take it from you." There was silence for a minute, then Bud took out his gun and handed it over, saying: "All right, if you want it so d——d badly as all that." Bud was sent into town the next day and fined $60. It is a peculiar thing how a man, with the law behind him, can cow one of these would-be "bad-men." Brooks told me years afterwards that he was in a great stew while Bud hesitated; but as he had put up the bluff he intended carrying it through, even to killing Bud, if he could, before Bud killed him. Bud's day was over, and shortly after he left the camp.

Towards the end of August the company decided to build a spur railroad connecting the mines with the Southern Pacific Railway at Cline Station. As I had some little experience in surveying, I was taken off the boilers and sent as rod-man with Himan the engineer, who was to be in charge of the work. This was a very nice change, and Himan was a fine fellow to work for, and willing to explain and teach all he could as the work went along. He was, however, very hot-headed, which got him into trouble while I was with him, and nearly cost him his life some years later. We were measuring one day on the dump (earth-fill), when a Mexican came along with a wheel-scraper. Himan called to the Mexican to stop, but the latter either did not hear or paid no attention, and drove his scraper over the tape. Himan cursed him in Spanish and English for his carelessness. The Mexican promptly turned loose his team, saying in Spanish, "You can't curse me," drew his knife and came at Himan. My rod was lying at my side, and I grabbed it and made a lunge for the Mexican, which distracted his attention, and the axeman coming up at the time, his ardour cooled a little. He went off after his team, and that night drew his pay and quit. The rest of us persuaded Himan to carry a pistol, as Mexicans will hold a grudge for months and get even if they can. About a week later I was helping Himan in the office, when he pulled out his pistol and laid it on the table. I picked it up, and found the hammer so rusted in the seat, from carrying it in the hip pocket without a holster, that I could not cock it. I advised Himan either not to carry a gun, or else to keep it in working condition.

Some two years later he was building a railway out of St. Luis Potosi, in Mexico. He had a strike amongst his men, and was advised to leave camp till the men quieted down. He started off, much against his will, and the men, seeing him go, started after him, calling him a coward, and daring him to come back and fight; at last one or two threw stones at him. He restrained himself as long as he could, but at this last insult he lost his head, jumped off his horse, drew his pistol, and ran back at the crowd. When he got close enough to shoot he found, to his horror and disgust, that his gun was jammed with rust. While he was looking at it and trying to cock it a Mexican made a stab at his throat. He saw the flash and ducked, and the knife took him in the cheek, the point passing out the other side, and loosening some of his teeth. Before the Mexican could use his knife again he was shot and dropped dead, and another Mexican who was in the act of stabbing Himan in the back was also shot. At this the rest of them ran, and Himan turned to find his rescuer was a little Spanish "cabo," or foreman, who had followed with a Winchester to see that Himan got safely out of the camp. Himan and his cabo had the usual trouble with the Mexican authorities, and lay in jail for some time, but finally got clear. When I next met Himan he told me that he had learned his lesson, and would never be caught napping again, as he cleaned and oiled his gun every day. He wanted me to go back and work for him, but at that time I had no idea that I wanted anything to do with Mexico.

CHAPTER XIII

Swimming-holes—Hunting in West Texas—Fishing in Nueces River—Jim Conners—Foreman Betner—A runaway car.

About a mile above the Cline mines there used to be a splendid swimming-hole, some 12 or 14 feet deep, with a sandy bottom, and a large flat rock on the bank to dress on. Many an exciting game of catch and water polo we had there during my first year at the mines.

But I shall never forget my first swim in this hole. A week or so after I arrived, I asked where a man could get a swim, as the creek at the mines was shallow, with a muddy bottom. A young fellow offered to show me a good place, and, as no one else seemed to want to go, we started off together, and he took me to the hole I have mentioned. When we arrived, he "guessed" he would not go in, so I stripped and dived in by myself, while he sat on the rock and watched me. After I had been in some ten minutes he drawled out, "Say! do you know why I and the other boys do not want to go in swimming?" "No," I said. "Why?" "Well," he said, "we're some scared of the alligators." I was out of the water in a flash, and then he began to laugh, and laughed all the way back to camp, where he told all the other boys, and they certainly had lots of fun at my expense. It turned out that there was not an alligator nearer than 100 miles of us.

But "water-moccassins" (a species of snake that lives in the water and is claimed to be poisonous) there are in plenty, though I never saw one bother anybody. They tell a story about a New York tourist in Florida who wanted to go swimming. His guide took him to a pool where there were lots of moccassins. The Northerner, in spite of his guide assuring him that they would not touch him, refused to go in, and demanded to be taken to some place where there were no snakes. The guide then took him over to a bayou, where there was not a snake to be seen. Here the Yank was satisfied, stripped, and went in for his swim. When he got out, he asked the guide if he could account for the fact that there were no snakes in the bayou when there were so many in the first pool. "How come there ain't no snakes in hyah? Why, the 'gators keeps them et up!" the guide replied.

Later on the company built two large dams, with a capacity of about five million gallons each, one below and one above the camp. The upper dam then became our swimming-hole, as it was closer to the works, and on it we also used to sail canvas boats or canoes that some of us made. Fish were very plentiful, mostly catfish, rock-bass, perch, and sunfish; though some years later I got black-bass from the government hatchery, and stocked the entire river with them.

This part of West Texas is an ideal hunting country for small game. There are plenty of rabbits, both the cotton-tail and the jack-rabbit, or hare; quail in thousands, both the Mexican and bob-white varieties, also at certain seasons of the year wild pigeon and duck of all kind abound; deer are plentiful of the "white-tail" variety, and a few "black-tail," and these are increasing, owing to the new protection laws passed by the state, whereby the sale of game is practically prohibited. Coyotes, javelines (the small wild boar), wild cat, fox, coons, and possum are plentiful in the lower part of the country, and up in the cedar brakes and hills in the northern part of the country there are still bear and panther to be found; these sometimes come down into the plains, one of the latter being shot about two miles below the mines, and on another occasion I saw two. Of turkey there are still a few left, but they are very wild, wilder even than the coyote, which is saying a good deal.

The fishing on the Nueces (Nut) River, about nine miles from the mines, is very good, and the water is of crystal clearness; there I have caught bass up to 12 lbs., and alligator char up to 4 feet in length, and have seen others over 6 feet long. Although these latter are no good for the table, they are well worth trying for, as they are one of the gamest fresh-water fish I have ever hooked; they have given me splendid sport, much to the disgust of my camp partner, who could not see the sense of catching fish that were not good for the pot, and then throwing them back again. They are a species of pike, with a much longer mouth, like an alligator, hence the name. Catfish also have been caught, weighing as much as 45 lbs., and a blue cat of that size will give a man all he can handle on a light rod.

Our new foreman, Betner, was a well-built man of about forty-five years' of age, of the stamp known as "raw-hider" in the States, and his boast was that he could get more work out of a gang of men than any man he had met. He was of the stamp of the famous Jim Conners. Conners was put as boss of a gang of rough longshoremen in Buffalo; before he started work he decided to call his men altogether and give them a talk. When he had them all there he roared out, "Now yez are to work for me, and I want every man to understand what's what. What I sez goes, and whin I spake I want yez to jomp, for I kin lick any man in the gang!" There was silence for a minute, then one burly fellow stepped out and said, "You can't lick me, Jim Conners." "I can't, can't I?" bellowed Conners. "No, you can't," was the reply. "Oh, thin go to the office and get your money," said Conners, "fer I'll have no man in me gang that I can't lick." So it was with Betner; he would not have any man in his gang who would not lick his boots.

His history will give some idea of the man himself, and also of what extraordinary chances some men get in this extraordinary country. Betner started life as a bell-boy in a hotel that used to be the stopping-place of Flagler, the great Standard Oil magnate, who tried later to build up Florida. He was a good-looking lad, quick and cheerful, and Flagler took an interest in him, and asked him one day if he would not like to quit the hotel and come and work for the Standard. Betner jumped at the chance, and Flagler gave him a job, kept his eye on him, and pushed him along all he could stand. After some years, when Betner was a grown man, he had charge of a small barrel repair shop for the Standard. Then Flagler came forward with the capital and started Betner in a cooper shop for himself, and at the same time gave him part of the Standard's contracts for barrels. He was clearing over $10,000 a year, when he got the idea that all his rise was solely due to his own wonderful business ability and efforts, and that he did not need Mr. Flagler any longer. He began drinking and gambling, and became a man about town—all of which were Mr. Flagler's pet aversions. He sent for Betner and remonstrated with him, and was practically told to mind his own business. After this the end came quickly, as Flagler broke him much quicker than he had raised him up. Then our superintendent, who had also been a Standard man before he came to us, and knew Betner in those days, gave him a job, and brought him to the mines.

Betner fell foul of me shortly after he arrived, and did his best to make things so unpleasant for me that I should quit; and this he kept up till the day he left, though he did not seem to have nerve enough to fire me. And I walked the chalk line as closely as I could, and tried to give him no opportunity. I found out later that the reason he was after my scalp was because he had got wind of the fact that I had been sent down by Bole of New York, who was at that time president of the company, and he thought I was there as a spy on the rest of them. But in any case it came natural to him to rawhide all the men, as he had been accustomed to do in the east, where men will either stand it or quit. Besides, he had been mostly handling submissive foreign emigrants, and now had a different class to deal with, and did not realise it. The Southern boys will not stand it except from some one they look up to and respect or fear. There used to be a man named Kipp Kinney at the mines, who really was a genuine gun-fighter. He had killed a man in Uvalde some years before, and had lived in the hills till the affair blew over. He had been with the sheriff, Pat Garrett (the most noted sheriff in the South at that time), when they had to kill the notorious Billy the Kid, who had killed nineteen men by the time he was nineteen years old. One has seen pictures of the typical Texas cow-boy, tall, ungainly, all bones apparently, with heavy eye-brows and a long drooping moustache. Well, add to this pale grey eyes, deeply set, dark reddish-brown skin, with little hair-like veins close to the surface, and a pronounced Roman nose, and you have Kipp. Kipp told me one day he was going to quit, and on my asking him why, said, "Well, you know that man Betner and I cannot just naturally get along. I guess he cannot help being as he is, but if I stay I shure'll have to kill him, and I am getting too old to have any more trouble." Betner was quite unaware of the risks he was taking with men of this stamp, for I proved later he had very little courage to back his bluffs.

He never learned much Spanish, but he had the Mexicans scared to death of him, and they jumped when he spoke, whether they understood clearly what he wanted done or not. One day Betner was raising a three-foot steel stack, forty feet long, up to its base on top of a boiler. He had it swung up on a block and tackle from a gin-pole, with three or four Mexicans on each guy-wire holding it perpendicular. He had it almost ready to place and lower away, when he found he needed one more man to assist him at the foot of the stack. Without turning round to indicate any particular man, he called out, in broken Spanish, "One man come here quick." Mexicans of this class are natural born fools, and each poor frightened man thought that he must mean him individually, so let go his guy-wire and ran to Betner. It is a wonder no one was squashed, as down came the stack and flattened out.

On one occasion Himan the engineer wanted to lower three flat cars loaded with bridge-timbers down the track that led to the mine, a 2½ per cent. grade. He put me on the first car ahead, took the last himself, and the axeman climbed on the middle one. When I slacked up my brake away we went, and in about 100 feet we were going fairly fast, so I jammed on my brake, and turned round in time to see the other two fellows jumping off. My brake had practically no effect on the speed, and they yelled to me to jump. But by the time I was ready we were close to the pit, and there were buildings so near the track on both sides, that I could not jump for fear of striking them. However, just as we passed the corner of the warehouse, there was a small clear space, and I jumped. As I picked myself up, I saw the last car going over the edge into the quarry. Also there was Mr. Betner, who asked me what I meant by jumping off and letting the cars go. I told him that I had done all I could, but could not hold them. He said no one but a born fool would attempt to move cars on that grade (thinking that I had been the one to move them), and just then the engineer arrived on the scene. He asked Betner if he were alluding to him, as he had ordered the cars moved, and then they had it out. It turned out that the middle car's brake was broken, and that on the last car the chain had come unhooked from the rod when Himan released it, so that my brake was the only one holding the three heavily loaded cars.

CHAPTER XIV

A Sunday fishing party—"Bad-men"—Ben Thompson and other desperadoes—The story of a hot spring.

A FEW weeks after I arrived at the mines, some of the men wanted to get up a fishing party one Sunday to go over to the Nueces River, and I was asked to make one of the number.

It was arranged that we should leave the mines on Saturday night, camp out, and come home on Sunday afternoon. We started at 6.30 P.M., got over to the river by eight o'clock, and by eleven o'clock I and a young electrician named Burnet were the only two sober men in the crowd. Luckily for me Burnet was a giant in strength and a "Long-horn" (as native-born Texans are called); for it was not long before the others started wrangling, and finally one of them said he could lick any one in the crowd, bare hands or with a knife. I and Burnet suppressed him and took away his knife, then Burnet told the rest of the men he would lick any one who started trouble, and we all rolled up in our blankets and tried to get some sleep. But every few minutes the first man would stick his head out of his blankets and say, "I can lick any one in the crowd." Finally, this got monotonous, and Burnet told him he would sit him on the fire to cool off. This subdued him for a while, and I was beginning to think for good, when, just as I was dropping asleep, out popped his head with the same remark, which he repeated again after a short interval. Not getting called down by Burnet, he finally got quite brave, crawled out of his blankets, and kept getting louder and louder in his remarks. Just as I was beginning to think Burnet must be asleep, and was preparing to try a fall with him myself, up jumped Burnet and, grabbing his man, threw him bodily into the fire. Luckily for the poor devil, he staggered as he fell, and consequently dropped mostly on the far side of the fire, with only his legs in it. He soon jerked them out, and escaped with no worse hurt than singed pants. After this we had peace for the rest of the night.

Next morning they started drinking again (we had not destroyed the liquor as we could not fight the whole crowd), but by noon we got them started home. Most of these young fellows would have been quiet enough in different surroundings. But the little town of Uvalde had turned out more "bad-men" than any town of its size in the West, and the fathers of these young men had been handy with a gun and mixed up in some shooting or other, so the sons thought it behoved them to keep up the family reputation. One young fellow, John Garnet (who was later my shift mate in the extracting house), was the only survivor of a large family, every member of which had died by violence. His father was a large sheep-owner and very brutal to his Mexican herders. One night the boys, coming home from a barbecue in town, found the old man tied in his arm-chair with his throat cut, and every herder on the place gone. There and then the eldest boy made a vow to kill every Mexican he met. He went over to C. P. Diaz, across the Mexican line from Eagle Pass, and shot two or three Mexicans who, he thought, had been implicated in his father's killing. The Rurales tried to arrest him, and he killed two and wounded three before they finally killed him. John himself I saw once in Uvalde, some years later, have a fight with his Cousin Joe, whom he licked. Joe said, "John, you are too big for me to fight with my fists, but I'll get my gun and fix you." The rest of us got round John, and finally got him into his buggy and started off to his ranch, but fifteen minutes later I saw him drive round the plaza with a shot-gun across his knees. We remonstrated with him, but all he would say was, "Boys, it's no use; I cannot leave town as long as Joe is looking for me." Luckily, some other friends had worked on Joe by telling him how bad it looked for the last two members of the family to be fighting, and got him to go home. It is this feeling that they cannot back down that makes so many young fellows who are naturally decent enough become killers and bad-men. For once you had killed some one and got a reputation as a fighter, your gun had to guard your life, for there were plenty of would-be fighters willing to try you out, and if they killed you they got the reputation you had and their own as well. The reader wonders probably why the city marshal or the sheriff did not interfere in a case like this. The reason is twofold: in the first place, whoever moved would make an enemy of both men if he interfered before there was any shooting done, and it would hurt his chances at elections; in the second place, because a fair, square "shooting-scrape" was even at that time not thought a very serious matter in West Texas. And how could it be otherwise in a community like Uvalde, where the man who was sheriff while I was there, and had held the office for twenty-two years, had killed more than one man in his youth in a private feud which his father had started; in a community where they still speak of Ben Thompson as a hero?

Ben Thompson was a noted character of San Antonio some years ago—a man utterly without fear, a good shot and quick on the draw. He was a bad-man of a peculiar type, insomuch as he never bothered any but bad-men, and therein lay his immunity from the law, as the men he killed were all practically outlaws, and he could always plead self-defence. When he heard of any really tough man in his neighbourhood who was wild and woolly, he would hunt him up, pick a quarrel with him, and generally shoot him. He finally fell out with the men who kept a gambling and dance hall in San Antonio, and in a row one night shot up the furniture and the lights. Subsequently, on two or three occasions when the thought of how he had been robbed there rankled in his breast, or perhaps just for excitement, he used to go in and kick up a row. Finally, this got monotonous, and they summoned up courage to call his bluff. They sent him word that he was not to come to their place again, as every man in the house would take a hand and kill him. When the message was brought to Ben Thompson, he said, "I wonder if they really have the nerve? Anyway, I'll just go and see about it," and over he went. The signal was passed from the door-keeper, and, as Ben opened the swinging doors, eight or ten pistols cracked at the same time, and Ben's days were over. They had the nerve all right when there were enough of them. I knew one of the men implicated in this killing some years later, and I never knew him to turn his back to anybody or to a door or window. He was not at that time scared of any one, but it had become a habit from years of watching for some of Ben's friends to avenge him.

Billy the Kid, of whom I made mention before, was a noted desperado, but of quite a different stamp. He never fought fair like Thompson, and never gave the other man a ghost of a show if he could help it. He was a half-breed Indian, or at least had Indian blood in him. When he was finally killed, it was proved that he had killed more than one man for every year he had lived. He is supposed to have originated, or at least brought to perfection, the art of whirling a gun and shooting. On two occasions when arrested, he pulled out his gun and handed it butt first to the sheriff, holding it by the barrel with the butt up and with his first finger in the trigger guard. As the sheriff on each occasion reached for the gun, the Kid would whirl it on his finger, and, as the butt reached his palm, shoot. Finally, as I said before, Sheriff Pat Garrett (a product of Uvalde) and Kipp Kinney went after him. They found out a Mexican girl whom the Kid used to visit, and lay in wait for him there after tying and gagging her. Garrett stayed in the house behind a sofa, and Kipp was to stay outside to see that the Kid did not get to his horse again after the shooting commenced. The Kid rode up when night fell and walked into the house; but, like all hunted animals, his suspicions were easily aroused, for he had hardly entered the dark room when he drew his pistol and asked who was there. As he called out, Garrett rose from behind the sofa, and, sighting the Kid against the light of the doorway, fired twice, killing him instantly. This was not showing much sporting spirit in Garrett, but the man was a murderer of the worst type, killing men just for the sport of it.

While I am on the subject of bad-men, I may tell a story of Luke Short, another of that ilk. Luke had been arrested by two deputies, who were taking him to the county seat, handcuffed, in a buggy. They stopped at a wayside saloon to get some refreshment, and, for security, left Luke handcuffed to the buggy wheel. While they were inside taking a drink or two, the door opened and in walked Luke Short with the wheel of the buggy to which he was still handcuffed. He went up to the barkeeper and said, "Colonel, these two snakes left me out there to die of thirst. I haven't any money in my pocket with which to pay, but how many drinks will you give me on this?" and he slapped the wheel down on the bar. How many drinks he got, or how he got the axlenut off, the narrator did not explain.

The same raconteur told me this other tale, which he also swore was true. He and a partner once found a hot spring and mud-bath of wonderful curative properties. A New Yorker, who was suffering from some complication of diseases, heard of it, and offered that, if they would take him out and it would cure him, he would not only pay them for their trouble, but buy their rights in the spring and bath as well. The money was payable on their return if he was cured, but said the narrator, "I never got the money." On being pressed, he told the following tale: "We took him out with ten pack-mules carrying fancy canned goods and other truck. When we arrived and pitched our camp, it was arranged that we should bury him in the mud every morning up to his neck and dig him out again every night. Well, after a week he was so much better that one night he opened up a bottle of champagne for a celebration. The next morning, after we had buried him, we were feeling pretty thirsty from the celebration, so my partner and I decided to sample some more of the fizz. One bottle led to another, so that by night we were too drunk to remember to dig him out. In the morning, when we came to life again, we went to see how he was getting along, and we found that the blamed coyotes had eaten his head off, so we lost our money."

The Pat Garrett above mentioned got such a reputation as a killer of bad-men that they paid him $10,000 to come up to New Mexico to be sheriff of a county there where the bad-man flourished. Later, he was with Roosevelt's rough-riders in the Spanish American War, and, when Teddy was elected president, he appointed Pat to be the head of the Customs Department in El Paso, Texas.

Some time ago he got into a private row with some farmer over irrigation rights, and the farmer killed him. " How are the mighty fallen ! "

CHAPTER XV

Coyotes—Wild turkeys—Lynching and Jury Trial in Texas—Pistol-shooting—Negro vitality.

I WAS telling a coyote story for which I cannot vouch, but I myself had an experience with a coyote one night when I was on a fishing trip on the Nueces River.

I and Ed Anderson, my pit boss, hired a wagon, and taking along a Mexican and his twelve-year-old boy (to cook and look after the horses), we drove down to the ranch, about forty miles below the mines, for a couple of weeks' fishing. One night we were all sleeping soundly, when I was awakened by Anderson's dog fighting with something at my feet. I sat up, and in the bright moonlight saw it was a coyote. As I jumped to my feet I instinctively lifted my blankets up with me, and I was lucky in doing so, for just then the brute made a dash at me. I threw the blankets over him, and, calling to the others, made for the wagon where my gun and rifle were. While I was hunting for them under the litter of camp stuff, Ed and the Mexican jumped up into the wagon. Then we discovered that the boy was still sleeping through the racket. The father kept holloaing, "Save my boy, oh, save my boy!" but not making any effort or move to get out of the wagon and do anything himself. However, by this time I had found my gun and some shells, and, waiting my chance till the dog and coyote got separated for a minute, I soon killed the latter.

In the morning we examined the coyote and came to the conclusion that it had hydrophobia, so we kept the dog tied up the rest of the trip as Ed would not let me shoot it. They told us at the ranch that quite a number of coyotes had been killed lately, one having run into a cow camp in broad daylight and attacked some of the men. But it was really funny for the rest of the trip, for, whenever a coyote howled close to the camp, out would pop four heads from the different blankets. One night I nearly scared the Mexican to death by hitting him with a clod of dirt just as he was dropping asleep. The howl he let out would have made a coyote envious. Nevertheless, we had a most enjoyable trip, and were not disturbed any more. It is a curious thing that although I have slept on the ground hundreds of times in Texas, rolled in my blankets, when hunting or fishing, I have never been bothered by tarantula, centipede, scorpion, rattlesnake, or any other of the reptiles with which the country abounds; and this was the sole occasion on which my sleep was disturbed in any way.

The Nueces River is so called from the immense quantities of pecan trees which line both banks from the head to the mouth, making delightful shade to camp under and a great feeding-ground for wild turkeys. The nut is something like a walnut, though about half the size. The wild turkey is probably the wildest thing to be found in the United States. I only killed three during my eight years in Texas, one with my revolver by a fluke shot, and two sitting roosting at night. Years ago they were in thousands both on the Nueces River and on Turkey Creek (the creek that ran through the mines)—were in fact so plentiful that Pinchot, who used to have a rest-house on the California trail that ran through Cline, told me he only used to bring home the breasts of the birds he killed to feed his guests. They were so plentiful on the market in San Antonio that people got tired of them and would pay a higher price for tame turkeys. A gentleman in San Antonio once asked his nigger to go out and buy him a tame turkey. "Now," he said, "don't you try and palm off any wild turkey on me." The man swore that he would not, and that evening the turkey arrived. When eating it the next day, the gentleman came across some shot in the turkey's breast.

He sent for the negro and said, "Sam, you promised you would not try and cheat me, but would bring me a tame turkey, and here I find shot in it." "'Deed, Boss," the man replied, "dat war a tame turkey all right, but de fact is, I'se goin' to tell you in confidence, dat dem shot war intended for me." This wholesale slaughter has made the turkey like the buffalo—very scarce where once they were to be found in thousands.

One hears a good deal about lynching, but of course it is not only negroes that get lynched. A few years ago it often happened that a town would get tired of one of its bad white men and take him out and hang him. But this is getting rarer and rarer, especially now when the law officers are starting prosecutions for manslaughter against every known member of a lynching mob. A few years ago, though, lynchings were very common. They tell a story about a lynching party riding up to a house, and the spokesman said, "Madam, we are sorry to report that we hanged your husband. We admit that we got the wrong man, so you sure have the laugh on us there."

Texas is different, I believe, from any other state in the Union in its methods of jury trial. Here the jury not only decides the innocence or guilt of the defendant but also assesses the punishment, and all the judge has to do apparently is to instruct the jury on points of law, and tell them the limits of punishment for the offence under trial. He also does the actual sentencing after the jury have brought in their verdict. I have seen myself, in a civil case, a lawyer rolling and smoking cigarettes while addressing the court, so one can imagine there is little of the majesty and dignity of the law in some Texas courts. A jury is said once to have sent the following note to the judge: "If you don't send us in something to eat we will have to find the defendant guilty; but if you send in plenty to eat and drink we will stay here till he is innocent." They tell about a J.P. up in Pecos county who had a man before him on the charge of shooting a Chinaman. He said, "I have carefully gone over the statutes of the state of Texas, and I cannot find it anywhere stated that it is a crime to kill a Chinaman. I therefore declare the prisoner free."

Henry Burns, our sheriff, was a fine-looking man, well over six feet in height. He did more than any one man to make Uvalde a law-abiding place during the twenty-two years he was sheriff. He was far from a good shot (I myself have beaten him pistol-shooting), but he was a man of wonderful nerve, which is what really counts. For a man may hit a target every shot at 30 yards, and yet cannot hit a man at 30 feet if the man is also doing some shooting. In my wanderings I have met one really wonderful shot who could, with a Colt's 44 frontier 7-inch barrel, hit a tomato can almost every shot at 40 yards. I have also known men, who were considered very good shots, stand at a distance of fifteen paces and empty their guns at one another without either getting a scratch. There is a saying throughout the South that the best weapon made is a double-barrelled shot-gun and buck-shot. I have heard and read a great deal about the wonderful pistol shots, but have, with the above exception, never met one who came up to the standards I have read of. The general advantage the bad-man had over the rest of the community was twofold: first, he practised drawing his pistol as quick as a flash, and then he always knew when he intended to shoot, while the other fellow was still thinking over the pros and cons. The first shot always counts in these affrays, as most of the shooting is done in a saloon or gambling-hall at a distance of a few feet when it is impossible to miss.

Henry Burns was considered a good, steady shot because of his nerve, but I have seen him miss a whisky bottle two or three times at a distance of about ten paces. He could shoot to kill, however, as the following instance will show. He used to relate this to show the wonderful vitality and grit of the negro. Henry had put this man in jail for some offence, and the man had sworn revenge and promised to kill Henry on sight after he was let out. One day Henry was standing at the corner of the Court House, when he saw the man with a pistol in his hand crossing the street toward him. Henry pulled out his own gun and called to the man to halt. The man made no reply, and Henry fired and kept it up till his gun was empty, the man still advancing. When the man was within two or three paces of Henry he raised his pistol, pointed it at Henry, made two or three attempts to pull the trigger, and collapsed almost at Henry's feet. When they picked him up he had five 41-calibre balls through his body, so Henry had only missed him once. With modern weapons, such as the Colt's, Luger, or Mauser automatic pistols, shooting becomes much easier, but with the old-time Colt there were few men who could be sure of hitting their man at 25 or 30 yards.

CHAPTER XVI

A "Periodical"—Italian treachery—Bitumen extractors—The Mexican disregard for orders—In charge of the stills—A vote canvasser.

HENRY BURNS had once to arrest a man who was a "periodical." He would not touch a drink for weeks, even months, at a time, then he would go on an awful spree, paint the town red, and end by shooting up the saloon. After one of these strenuous sprees, Henry told him that he had reached the limit, and that he would be arrested the next time he caused any trouble. A month later the man went on another spree and started in to enliven the town. After a while he heard that Henry was after him, so he went over to his office in the Court House (he was county clerk) and locked himself in, sending word to Henry not to disturb him or he would shoot him. Henry picked up two or three deputies and went to make the arrest. When they reached the locked door Henry made his deputies stand on either side, while he broke it down. "Now," he said, "boys, I will go in alone and try to arrest him quietly; but, if he shoots me, take no chances, but kill him." As he broke in the door, the man, who sat behind his desk with a shot-gun resting on it and pointing at the door, called out, "Henry, I will have to kill you if you come in." Henry did not even draw his pistol, but walked quietly up to the desk and took the gun away. The man's nerve failed at the last minute, and, as Henry laid his hand on the gun, he turned and jumped out of the window, with Henry after him. The drop was slight, with grass below, and he was arrested and put in jail. A month or so later he was again arrested and locked up, got into a fight with another prisoner, and was killed by the latter. His son ever after claimed that Henry had hired the man to kill him, which was manifestly absurd.

Texans, as a rule, will give a man a fair fight and some chance for his life, but all the men at the mines were not Texans, not even Americans. There were two Italians from New York, expert mastic-makers, who were sent down by the company to instal a mastic plant. One of them had trouble with the foreman and laid a trap for him. On the third storey of the mastic-house there was a balcony exactly over the main entrance. Here the Italian took his stand, leaning on the rail, and at his feet a piece of plank. When the foreman passed underneath, he timed things very nicely, tipped the plank over the edge with his foot as he turned, and went into the building, not stopping to see the result. Fortunately, some one saw the whole performance and yelled. The foreman ducked, and the plank struck him a glancing blow on the shoulder. Of course it was "an accident"; but both Italians were discharged at once.

The branch railroad on which I was employed being completed, I was put in the extractor house as apprentice to learn the work. After the rock is crushed to about two inches in diameter, it is put into large steam-jacketed extractors holding five tons each. The top is sealed down and naphtha pumped in on the rock till the extractors are full; then steam is turned into the jacket, and the hot naphtha extracts all the bitumen from the rock. After a while the asphalt-laden naphtha is drawn off; the rock is then washed with fresh naphtha, which, in turn, is drawn off. The live steam is turned in on the rock and drawn off through condensers, carrying with it the last of the naphtha. The condensed steam and naphtha are run through a settler having two pipes, one at the top to carry off the naphtha to its tank, and one at the bottom for the water. Two or three days after I started in the extractor house the man in charge let the water run too low, and thus some naphtha got out through the water-pipe into the creek, for which he was discharged. I was then put in charge, and though I hardly knew anything about the business, I dared not let the opportunity for advancement slip by me.

There were five of these extractors and two pumps to look after, and it kept me on the move. The second or third day one of the pumps went on strike, and I had to take it down and get it working again. When I got through I went my rounds, and found to my horror that I also had let the water get too low in one of the settlers. Here was an opportunity to get rid of me, and I very soon got my "time." Then Providence took a hand in my behalf, for my predecessor had left the camp and the day man got sick. The night man took one of his shifts, and then tried to take his own, but gave out; and so at 12 P.M. the foreman came and woke me up to go back again. We had the naphtha stored in overhead tanks, and the orders were most strict against smoking or carrying matches near the works; yet one day we caught one of the extractor loaders sitting on top of the overhead naphtha tanks smoking a cigarette, endangering not only his own life but that of every man on the place.

It seems natural to Mexicans to disobey orders if they think there is the bare chance of their not getting caught; and the more danger there is the more they seem to like it. There used to be a standing order that no one was to ride on the ore cars that ran on the incline down into the pit. One day while I was still working on the crusher I saw a rather amusing thing occur through a man disobeying this order. One of the Padillas, brother of the hoister man, was riding the car down to the pit, when his brother, thinking to have some fun with him, slipped the clutch, and let the car go at a tremendous pace. When, however, it neared the switch at the bottom of the incline, where the cars branched off to the different parts of the pit, the hoister man got scared and lost his head; instead of gently slipping the clutch in, he jammed it down hard and stopped the car dead, standing his brother on his head in the car. Talking of car accidents, another happened a couple of years later, when we had enlarged the plant and built a new extractor house up on the hill. To get the crushed rock up to this house we built a double track incline 900 feet long, with a rise of about 70 feet. The ore bin was set up over these tracks, and behind the bin was a platform on struts, on which was placed a double drum hoisting engine. One day I had just come out of the pit when I heard some one shout, and, looking up, I saw that the cable had parted and the car with two tons of rock in it had started down the incline from near the top. I shouted to the hoisting man to get down out of the way, but he seemed fascinated by that car, and stood there with his mouth open watching it come. By the time it reached the bottom it was going like an express train, and the way it took the struts out from under the engineer's platform was a sight to see. Down came the engineer, but he was up and dusting himself by the time I reached him; and all he said was, "H—l! she was sure travelling!"

I was working with Himan, the civil engineer, when we built this incline. We built the bents on the ground, marked a centre, then hoisted them upright, and while Mexicans held it steady with guy-ropes, I climbed on top and gave Himan a "sight" with a pencil, while the men moved it on the mud-sill, with bars, one way or another as he directed. I did not relish the job, as I had a very poor head for working on heights, and had little faith in the men on the guy-ropes. Himan used to laugh at me, but one day we were up in the extractor house and he walked out on a 2-inch by 12-inch plank that was laid out to the first bent. A 2-inch plank over a 15-foot span bends considerably under a man. However, he got out all right on the bent, and, after looking at the placing of some sheave wheels, he started back. He had already begun to get giddy, and, when he stepped on the plank and it bent, he lost his nerve so much that in spite of my laughing at him he crawled in on his hands and knees. After the incline was completed, we put up a 4-inch by 12-inch plank "run-way" the whole length between the tracks for the men to go up and oil the sheaves. Working on heights is all a matter of practice, and few men can do it the first time, though of course there are exceptions. Once when shingling a very steep roof I worked the first two days sitting in a sling and expecting every few minutes to fall off; but after a while, with three or four pair of heavy woollen socks to keep me from slipping, I was running all over the same roof and never thought of falling. I have won many bets from cow-punchers who came to the mine that they could not run up the 900-foot incline in two minutes. They would start away at racing gait, then, as the incline left the ground, they would slow down to a walk, and finally they could be seen carefully placing one foot in front of the other, till generally they gave up and came back. As one fellow said, "Down here that plank is wide enough for me to ride my horse on, but up there it is like walking a tight-rope."

After some time in the extractor house I was given charge of the stills, where the naphtha was driven off, cooled, and returned to its tank, and the pure bitumen left, which was run into barrels. A short while after

I got this move, a firm in New York contracted to take our entire output to make into paint and varnish. They were looking for a local agent, and I got the position. I had to see that all the output was up to a certain grade, and when stored in the warehouse or shipped I gave receipts for it on which the company got their money. One day when I was at work a man came out to the warehouse, got into conversation, and after a while offered me a cigar. I told him I could not smoke there, but he insisted on my taking it anyway and smoking it later. He and I had quite a chat, and after a long while he finally drew a card out of his pocket and asked for my vote, as he was running for some county office. The look of disgust that spread over his face when I informed him that I was a British subject and had no vote was truly ludicrous, as he thought of his wasted time and cigar. On railway journeys sometimes this canvassing is a nuisance; moreover, the excuse that you are a Britisher is not always cordially accepted. I said in an early part of these reminiscences that I had been roasted by Americans for many years, and now had a chance when they could not reply to me of getting back a little. But it is a fact that among a certain class of people in the States that the instant they find you are English they immediately drop all other topics of conversation to refer to the time "we licked you badly," or to discuss the degeneracy of the House of Lords, or some other topic which they think will be of interest to you. At first I used to get very angry and try to argue with them, but later I gave this up, and found the only position to take was one of superiority, and say in so many words, "How can people be so ignorant of facts, so dense as to talk such utter rot? Yet they look intelligent."

CHAPTER XVII

Elections in Texas—Feuds and shooting affrays—Family pride—Local Prohibition.

ELECTIONS used to be exciting events in Uvalde, Texas, during the first few years I was there, as the Mexican vote controlled the county, and the rival candidates used to give dances for them, where there was plenty of liquor and cigars. But for the past few years this has all been stopped, as the Mexican vote has fallen to practically nothing, owing to a law that was passed by which every voter had to show his poll tax receipt when registering, and a Mexican will die sooner than pay poll tax—in fact will never pay any tax if he can get out of it. In order to stop the candidates (in a close election) paying the tax for them, the law said that the receipt must be dated at least six months before the election. It is curious in the States how in certain localities certain nationalities control the elections; in some places it is the negro vote, in others, the Mexican, or it may be the German vote. I heard of an election once for county officers in a county where Swedes predominated, where all the officers on the list but the sheriff were named Oleson or Paulson or other such name, but the sheriff's name was Brown. A visitor said, "I see that all your county officers but the sheriff have Swedish names ; his sounds American." "Yes," was the answer, "they are all Swedes but him, and we only put him up to catch the American vote." I know towns in South-west Texas where one will not hear a word of any language but German spoken from dawn to dark, unless one does not happen to know the language and they have to address you, when they will speak English. Yet all the Germans there were born in Texas and never saw their native land. The trouble with these Mexican voters is that they will promise you anything while at your dance drinking your liquor ; but they promise the same to the other man at his dance ; so you never can tell what they will do at the polls, unless you have them under your thumb as we had them at the mines. For instance, we, for years, only employed Mexicans who brought us a paper from Henry Burns the sheriff, saying they were all right (meaning they would vote for him) ; yet later, when I was in charge of the mines and was fighting against Henry's election, these same men, with only one exception, voted against Henry under instructions from me.

It was at one of these elections that the son of the county clerk (before mentioned as a "periodical") and Henry Burns' son John met in the Horseshoe saloon in Uvalde. After a few words the clerk's son pulled a knife, bent John Burns over the bar, and tried to kill him, in revenge for the supposed killing of his father by the orders of Henry Burns. Luckily, the knife struck the brass support of the bar-rail and the blade broke half-way up, and at the same time one of Henry's deputies tried to get the boy off John by stunning him from behind with brass knuckles. The boy had grit, however, and while his own head was being cut open with the knuckles he was doing all he could for John with the stub of his knife, and they were both a sight to see for weeks after. Henry himself, when a boy, was the cause of starting the big feud which kept Uvalde stirred up for quite a while. It started in a fist fight between him and young Gilchrist in the Uvalde camp yard.

Gilchrist's father and uncle were there cheering their boy on. When he finally got Henry down they were so worked up they were calling to their boy to kill Henry. The old man was dancing round, holloaing, "Kill him, Bud, kill him," when Henry Burns' father (who had been a general in the confederate army) came out of Piper's store. He took in the situation at a glance, and, whipping out a bowie-knife, he ran at the elder Gilchrist and with one stroke cut him almost in two. The uncle and son made their escape for the time being and the feud was on.

One incident of this trouble seemed to me characteristic of the grit and coolness of these men. One member of the Gilchrist faction (a man considerably over sixty) was upstairs in the old Uvalde Hotel when Henry Burns passed and stopped to speak to some one under the balcony.

The old man picked up his shot gun and, leaning over the balcony with the muzzle of the gun about six feet from Henry's head, pulled both triggers. The gun missed fire, but Henry hearing the clicks whirled round, and had the old man covered before he could move. He held him so for a few moments, then he said, "I ought to kill you, you old scoundrel, but I guess I will let you off this time." Then he turned and walked off.

On another occasion a deputy-sheriff, who was on the Burns' side, had arrested one of the opposite faction for being drunk and disorderly. He had taken him by surprise, disarmed him, and was escorting him to jail. On the way to the lock-up, the boy (for he was nothing but a lad), feeling keenly the disgrace of being so arrested without fight, taunted the officer with taking him by surprise. He told him that he dared not have arrested him in any other manner, and dared the officer to return his gun and then try and rearrest him. The officer was about to accept the challenge, when one of the boy's friends rode up and warned the deputy. Said he, "The kid's drunk, and has no show against you who are sober, so if you give him back his gun and then kill him, I will sure kill you." However, the deputy had been so annoyed by the boy's taunts that he handed him his gun and the shooting commenced. Of course the boy was shot, but at the same time the man on the horse shot the deputy, and left town at a gallop.

A man who will receive a gun in this manner has no chance, even if sober, unless he is like lightning, because as his hand touches the butt the other man shoots. Not necessarily because he wishes to take any advantage of the other, but because he is all keyed up and shoots involuntarily the moment he sees the other man is armed: somewhat the same impulse that causes false starts in square racing. I saw a case in the Silver King Saloon in San Antonio one night. Two men had a row, and one slapped the other's face and then immediately drew his gun. (It is generally safer to kill a man first, and slap him afterwards.) The man who had been slapped said: "You cur, you only dare strike me because I am unarmed, and you have a gun."

"Don't let that worry you," said the other; "I will lend you a gun," and with his left hand he drew a second gun and offered it to the man, butt first. The other, however, was too wise even to put out his hand, and by this time the "lookouts" of the gambling hall and the barkeepers got around the armed man and hustled him out, for it hurts business to have any shooting in the house, besides the inconvenience of the trial, &c. It is a bad business to be an "innocent bystander" in cases of this kind, as they are the ones that generally get hit. But, unfortunately, I had no place to go to, as the negro porter had, who was a witness at the trial of a killing which occurred in the hotel where he worked. He was asked how many shots were fired, and he answered "two." "At what intervals of time?" "About one second." "Where were you when the shots were fired?" "Well, boss, when the first shot was fired I was in the hall shining a gentleman's shoes, but when the second shot was fired I was passing the depot!"

Texas is different from most other southern states, where pride of family is very strong. In Texas, a few years ago, it was not considered good form to dig into a man's antecedents or family record, as you were liable to come across the bar sinister in the shape of a noose at the end of a rope.

Consequently, rank and family were not much considered, and a man had to stand on his own record. An English "remittance-man" in one of the small Texas towns had two titled friends come to visit him. One day in the hotel he thought he would impress the natives, so he said to the clerk, "Jim, this gentleman is a viscount in England, and this other gentleman is an earl."

But Jim had never heard of such things, and asked what it all meant. It was explained that these were marks of distinction by which you could tell a man's social standing. "Oh," he said, "now I see; but there are only two kinds of people here—those that call for soda in their whisky, and the others that aren't so darned particular." On the other hand, war records are very much prized and brought forward on all occasions. More especially at elections, where, if the record is very good, it is almost sure to capture the votes. But that this is not always the case the following instance will show. An old veteran on the stump was giving his record as follows:—

"Fellow-citizens, I have fought and bled for my country. I have fought the savage Indian; I have slept on the field of battle with no covering but the heavens; I have marched barefoot till every footstep was marked with blood!"

At the close of his oration one of the leading citizens approached him, wiping the tears from his eyes, and in a voice broken with emotion said:

"My dear man, if you have done all you claim, I'm afeered I'll have to vote for your opponent, for I'll be gosh darned if you ain't done enough for your country already."

The first election in which I took any active part occurred when I was in charge of the mines, and was fought over the question of prohibition. A retired cattleman, who owned a saloon in Uvalde, had been of much assistance to the company and to me personally, and we were under many obligations to him. I had promised him in my own and the company's name to return favours when called upon. He wired me one day to come in to town, and when I drove over he told me that there was to be an election to vote the county "dry," and he needed our help. This I promised, and when the election came off the county went "wet" by thirty-five majority, and as our box gave some forty-five "wet" votes, we had been the means of carrying the election. At first there was some talk of throwing out our box on the ground of undue influence, but finally they decided to accept defeat for the present. Uvalde since then has voted "dry," and in fact the large majority of Texas counties have local prohibition, though the liquor interests have so far kept "dryness" out of State elections. Local prohibition is, however, becoming each year a more prominent factor, and in a few years Texas is sure to be a "dry" State. Last election I was told the fight turned almost entirely on the liquor question, and each candidate, for even trivial positions, was asked where he stood. One candidate, on being asked, as he stepped down from the platform, "Do you drink?" said: "Before I can answer that question truthfully I must know is this meant as an inquiry or an invitation?" I may give the impression from the above that I am in favour of the liquor business. But nothing is further from the truth, as I am a great believer not so much in local prohibition as in national. But with me it was a case of carrying out a promise made, at no matter what cost to my personal views.

Texas is not in all respects so lawless as one might suppose from what I have written; for instance, my father and sister visited me for six weeks in 1896, and they rode about everywhere in perfect safety. On the other hand, while he was there, the superintendent twice borrowed money from him, for petty cash. They, of the staff, were four men in one house, well armed, but "they were not paid to fight," so they kept no money. Everything was paid by cheques on Uvalde, eighteen miles distant! Nor was this without reason, for twice in that year even town banks were attacked. In one case the employees beat off the robbers; in the other the citizens pursued and hanged them.

CHAPTER XVIII

A "Grandstander"—The Sheriff takes possession—Night Watchman—Monte Jim—Further trouble.

Besides Henry Burns, the sheriff, there was also another man whose re-election I opposed. He was the city marshal of Uvalde, and a regular "grandstander," as they call a man who is always striking poses. The young man before mentioned as having caused so much trouble on my first fishing trip, got drunk and disorderly once in Uvalde, and some one told the city marshal. Instead of quietly arresting the young fellow, he walked up pompously, drew his pistol, and sticking it in Jim's face arrested him in the name of the State. To his astonishment Jim made a snatch and took the gun away before the marshal was quite through posing, which was manifestly taking a mean advantage of him. Then Jim said, "Run, you coyote, or I'll kill you," and run the marshal did, with Jim after him; and at every jump he would shout "Don't shoot, Jim." Finally Jim tired and let him go, and the marshal never had the nerve to lay any complaint. So at the next election we ran him out.

While I was working on the branch railway to the mine, there was a gang of nine men putting up small bridges and culverts. All the members of this gang were relations, except one man, and he was made the butt of all the jokes and horseplay; and some of them were pretty rough. Finally one day the worm turned and said to his tormentors that he had stood all he was going to stand, then walked off towards their camp, about two miles away. They passed it off with a laugh, thinking they could smooth him down in the evening when they returned to camp. But to their astonishment he turned up again, in about an hour, armed with a shot-gun, and aiming it at his principal tormentor he told him he would give him a minute to say anything he wished to, or to pray if he so desired. The bridgeman told him, at the end of the time, to go ahead and shoot if he intended to, as he was ready. The man stood for a minute hesitating, then turned and walked down to the mines. I had rather liked the fellow, and felt sorry for him, and when I heard of the trouble I went and had a talk with him before he left. I asked him why he had walked four miles for a gun and then not used it. He said, "I intended to kill him up to the last second, and then to wipe out as many of the rest of them as I could. But I could not shoot him while he stood still. If he had come at me, or run away, or if any of the others had moved, I should have fired, but I could not as things were."

About this time there occurred a rather amusing shooting case in Uvalde. Our head book-keeper was a Texan, the shipping clerk was a New Yorker. They went to town together to celebrate. When they were both half drunk, the Texan asked the other if he had a gun, and on his replying "No" he seemed much shocked, and said he would borrow one for him. This he proceeded to do from a bar-keeper, and handed it to Tom the New Yorker, who, however, was too drunk to put it away in his pocket, and for the rest of the time carried it in his hand. After a few more drinks they got into some argument on the street, and the next minute the Texan was emptying his gun at Tom. The latter was so far gone that he had actually forgotten the gun in his hand, and never used it at all; in fact, he did not know that the Texan was firing at him at all—so he said the next morning in court. Luckily no one was hit, but the book-keeper was fined fifty dollars for "shooting in the city limits."

While I was agent for the New York paint firm the company began to get into difficulties, but the first intimation we had of it was when the sheriff drove out one day and seized the property in the name of the bondholders. This threw us all out of our jobs, and the place was closed down. This was tough, as I was a shareholder, and my father was a bondholder; however, I got an offer of a few days' surveying of some boundary lines for a man, but it turned out a poor job for me; for while I was away the court appointed watchmen, and I lost the chance of this. There were four watchmen appointed, one from Uvalde, and the other three were the superintendent, the foreman, and the shipping clerk I mentioned above. I certainly was disappointed when I got back and found out what I had missed. I had to send my wife and boy off to Vancouver, B.C., to her mother, and settled down to wait till the court proceedings were over. After a few weeks the shipping clerk got sick and I was put as night watchman in his place, which job I shared with Betner the foreman. He watched the far buildings on the hill and I watched the main buildings and the offices. At midnight I cooked supper and then whistled for him to come in and eat. He used to order me about more than I thought was justified in our present positions, so one night I "called his bluff" and told him I would have no more. The next morning Mr. Brown, the superintendent, sent for me and told me that I had been reported by Betner for reading on my watch instead of attending to my duties. We were entitled to an hour for supper, but it seldom took us over ten or fifteen minutes to eat. As soon as Betner was through he used to take a nap for the balance of the hour near the stove, and I used to read. I used to wake him when the hour was up and we went back to work. This was the reading he tried to make Mr. Brown believe I did all night. I explained this to Mr. Brown, and he said it was all right. This last straw put me in fighting trim, and that night I cooked my own supper and ate it, and when Betner came in I gave him my opinion of him in language he could understand. I told him also that in future he could cook his own meals, as I would have nothing further to do with him. But if he bothered me again I would beat him, and if he bluffed with his gun I would kill him. He then showed the stuff that was in him, for at first he blustered and finally crawled.

Some few months afterwards, when the receivership was done away with, Betner and Brown quarrelled, and Betner was dismissed. We were none of us sorry to see him go. It was a case like the bad man who was dying. A clergyman went to see if he could make him repent. He pictured the future in such glowing terms that he had the man convinced. At last he said, "Brother, are you not ready to go?"

and the bad man replied, "Yes, I am very glad." "Thank Heaven," said the pastor, "because that makes it *unanimous*." I don't think, however, Betner was glad to go, though I can swear that the rest of us were unanimous.

The bondholders now took hold of the property, and we started up again and I sent for my family. The shipping clerk had left in the meantime, and I was appointed shipping and material clerk, and also had charge of the company's commissary store, in which I had two assistants. A new foreman was brought in from San Antonio. He was known by the name of "Monte Jim," having been at one time a professional gambler (Monte being a Mexican gambling game). How Mr. Brown ever came to hire him I don't know, as the man was a crook of the worst kind. The first trouble I had with him was when I found out he was playing poker with one of my store boys, and that the latter in order to pay his debts was stealing from the store. I stopped this by firing the boy and warning Monte that he had to stop this business. Later we clashed again on the question of authority. Mr. Brown had told me that in the commissary and material storeroom I was supreme, and laid down certain hours during which they were to be open. Monte disputed my authority one day, and ordered me to close the store and open the storeroom for him out of hours; we had an argument, and I ran him out of the store, and after this we had no more trouble. He was, I knew, taking rebates from the men (that is, the men paid him part of their pay to be easy on them). I was not hunting trouble, however, so kept my knowledge to myself, especially as it would have been practically impossible to prove a case against him. The men would naturally all have sworn that it was not so, if inquiry had been made. He was also, I heard, bringing liquor into the place and selling it to the men, besides increasing his income playing poker. One day he came to me and asked me to lend him my pistol, as he was going to town in company with the pit-foreman, the latter's daughter, and the pumper; and was taking in a good deal of money to the bank. I refused to lend my gun (as I did not want it confiscated in case of trouble), but lent him a 44 rifle carbine, which would serve better to protect the cash but could hardly be carried round town for trouble purposes—at least so I then thought. I did not like the idea of the girl going, as the men were all hard drinkers, and her father I knew had already killed two men. He had got into a fight with them in a saloon, and one of them had knocked him down. As he fell he drew his gun and killed them both, getting off, of course, on the ground of self-defence. However, I could not say anything, and anyway it was none of my business, so off they started. In the evening the girl walked past the office by herself. I asked her where her father, Monte, and the pumper were. She told me her father had driven round by the back gate, so she had got out and cut across; that the pumper had fallen out of the wagon about half a mile back; and Monte was riding in by himself on horseback.

I went out to see about the pumper, and on my way passed the pit-foreman in the wagon trying to drive the team across the pit, and the unhappy owner of the wagon running like mad to save his team from destruction!

The pumper I found sleeping in a sage brush where he had fallen, and had him brought in. After a while, Monte came in and I got my rifle away from him. It seemed that they had quarrelled in town, and that the pit-boss, his daughter, and the pumper had driven off in the wagon, leaving Monte to walk. The latter had hired a horse and started in pursuit; when he came in sight of the wagon he started shooting with my rifle to stop them. On this the pit-boss said he would go back and kill him. But as he was getting out of the wagon his daughter slipped his pistol out of the holster. Luckily for the unarmed pit-boss, Monte did not await his arrival, but rode off when he saw him climb out of the wagon. The rest of them came on home, but as they were rounding a corner the pumper, who had stood up to make a speech (on the evils of drink, I presume), fell out, and slept peacefully till I rescued him. This escapade was the end of Monte Jim and the others, and I was put in charge of the works as foreman, still retaining my other jobs.

CHAPTER XIX

Promoted to Foreman—Overwork and Eyestrain—Mexican Traits—Amateur Doctor—A rival Asphalt Company—Its Failure.

I HAD plenty to attend to when I was promoted to be foreman, but was so pleased that I tried to do the whole job by myself; I succeeded for some three or four months, nearly breaking myself down in the attempt, and later found out that I got no thanks from the company either. I used to be at the office at 6.30 each morning to lay out the day's work and to issue time checks to the men who were to go to work. During the day I was over the plant and in the pit on practically continuous rounds, and between times I was in the office attending to my correspondence, making out reports for the head office, and posting my books, as I had no office help at all. At 6 P.M., when the day-shift came off duty, I opened up the commissary, and with the help of a Mexican assistant I issued to the men the food, &c., they wished to buy. This generally took till 7.30 P.M., then to supper, and back to the office with a round or two over the works to see what the night-shift were doing; and then to bed at 10.30, sometimes midnight. Finally my eyes gave out from doing so much office work under an electric light, and I practically broke down from overwork. A man can stand long hours for a short time; I myself have often stood thirty-six and forty-eight hour shifts in the extractor house, two such shifts in one week but with a rest between; it is the long, steady grind that wears one out. I had to get leave and go into San Antonio to see an oculist, who gave me glasses and fixed me up so that I could return to work, but under orders to do no reading or writing at night for some months. The name of the eye trouble I was suffering from I have forgotten, but it was not the same as that of the man I heard of who, when the oculist had fitted on a number of different glasses said, in reply to the question as to how he could see with the last pair, "Well, the green giraffe I can shee firsh rate, but the red elephant and the purple trantula still look kinder—kinder blurred." I wrote to the company that I either must have assistance, or an immediate rise of salary to warrant doing the work and taking chances. They replied that the salary I was receiving was all that the position I held was worth, but they sent me a man to take charge of the commissary, and let me get a book-keeper to do the office work, so that I had little night work to do.

I was practically the law and the prophets among the Mexicans at the mines, and they soon learned that I would carry out anything I said. Of course they had to prove this by a course of experiments, for the Mexicans hate to take anything for granted. I remember, once, two of them having an argument in the pit as to whether an electric fulminate cap could be exploded by a blow or only by the electric spark, one of them must needs experiment by striking the cap with a stone; it took him the rest of the day to get the pieces of stone out of his hand. I had issued an order that any man coming drunk on to the work would be discharged, and my best "hand driller" tried the experiment and went herding goats for a change. So things went on till they were convinced. This confidence that I could and would do what I said got me out of a hole once. There was a young Mexican at the mines who had been ill-treating his wife, and finally one evening he decided to kill her. She managed to escape from him, and ran over to the house of the head fireman, whose wife gave her shelter, the fireman himself turning out and running the husband off with a rifle. I heard about it the next morning, and that the husband was still full of threats.

So I sent for him, his wife, and the fireman, and held court. The wife refused to return to the husband, as she said he would certainly kill her, and the fireman and his wife also refused to give her up. The husband of course denied all the charges, and said he could not return to Mexico without his wife, as suspicion would be aroused. I was in a quandary, for I knew that unless I could get the young fellow away either he or the fireman would get killed, and I could not afford to lose the fireman. Finally I gave the young fellow the alternative of either leaving the place at once, and leaving his wife in the care of the fireman and his wife, or I would take him into town and turn him over to the sheriff. It did not take him long to make up his mind that he did not want to make the acquaintance of the sheriff, and so he skipped out. The story somehow leaked out, and the next time I met Henry Burns the sheriff he joked me unmercifully about my divorce court. On another occasion an old woman, who ran a sort of restaurant for the bachelor Mexicans at the mines, came rushing to the office to tell me that two drunken Mexicans had run her out and were tearing her house to pieces; then just as I started off she warned me to be careful, as they both had pistols.

I went over to Mexico (as we called the Mexican part of the camp), and as I approached the old woman's house, I saw the two men standing outside the door, but as soon as they saw me they went inside. It scared me for a minute, for I expected they would take a shot at me from some crack or other, but, just as I reached the door, they both stepped out again. I then searched them and found neither of them armed, and they denied that they had done anything or bothered the old woman, though they were both pretty drunk, so I let them go, thinking the old hen had lied. Then as I started to go back to the office I thought I would take a look in the house and see if any damage had been done, and there in a corner lay the two pistols. I had no real authority either to make arrests or even carry a pistol, as I was not a deputy-sheriff, nor could I be made one, as I was not an American citizen; but Henry Burns had told me to carry a gun and try and keep the peace unofficially, which I did to the best of my ability. Once a Mexican came running to tell me that a man and a woman were lying dead on the road from the mines to Uvalde, about half a mile from the mine. I hurried over and found the woman sure enough dead, shot through the heart from behind, but the man was still alive, though a horrible sight to see. I used to keep a medicine chest and plenty of lint and bandages, as, having no doctor nearer than eighteen miles, I used to attend to all hurts, and even prescribed remedies in simple cases, till my wife protested at the string of sick babies that used to be brought up for my inspection. As was proved at the subsequent trial, the man had killed the woman and then attempted suicide. He had stuck his Winchester under his chin and kicked the trigger. The bullet broke his jawbone and came out over his right eye. I washed out the wound and tied his face back into place, and just then Henry Burns arrived on the scene and I turned the whole business over to him. He was on his way over to the mines about another case. They carted the Mexican over to his house and put a guard over him; just as they were laying him on the bed he mumbled something, turned over, and pulled a pistol out of the back of his waistband, that was hurting him as he lay. Henry laughed at me for not searching my prisoner. The man was a poor half-witted chopper working for our firewood contractor. He got a ten-year sentence, and died later in the penitentiary.

A rival asphalt company started to open up another deposit two miles below our mine, and began to haul their product to the Cline station through our land. Under orders from the head office I went out, took down all gates, and fenced all roads up solid, so that they could not haul through the company's pasture.

The law in the State of Texas makes it a felony to cut a man's pasture fence, and the punishment is up to five years in the penitentiary. A couple of days after I had fixed the fences the station agent at Cline telephoned me that the wagons were up there again unloading. I got on my horse, and soon found where they had torn down the fence and come through. I wired the sheriff to send me out a deputy at once, and on his arrival went out with him and a gang of men, rebuilt the fence, and the lot of us sat down to await results. Soon the wagons arrived, and on the first one sat the president of the rival company and his lawyer. The former, whom I knew, called out to me and asked me why I had built the fences so strong, as it only gave his men unnecessary trouble. The deputy then warned him that he was breaking the law in touching the fence, but he gave his men orders to pull it down, and they came on through. I wanted the deputy to arrest him, and I and my men would help, but he refused, for fear, as he said, of trouble; but his real reason, I found out later, was that his orders from Henry Burns were not to make any arrests. The case came up for trial, and Henry Burns turned us down, getting an unfriendly jury who threw the case out of court. He had been bought by the opposition, and this was the main ground on which I fought him later at elections. We got an injunction in the federal court, prohibiting them from crossing our grounds, and they had to haul to Uvalde, twenty miles, instead of Cline, eight miles. The whole thing, however, had been a bluff, as their deposit was worthless, and they were simply trying to scare us into selling our product at a low price to them. Their bluff not working, they finally had to buy material from us at our own price, as they had a large paving contract to fill and nothing to fill it with. The way these bluffs are worked in some of the States, regardless of law, is simply astounding.

CHAPTER XX

More American Business Methods—Trip to Corpus Christi—Trouble at the Mine—West Texas as a Health Resort—Expenses of the Simple Life.

I MENTIONED some of the lawless and extraordinary things done in American business. When I was in California an oil company was building a pipe line to carry their product to market. Whenever they could they bought the right of way over private lands that they had to cross, but whenever they could not buy at a price satisfactory to them, they simply surprised the owner by building over his land at night, and let him wake up in the morning to find the line an accomplished fact. Then it was up to him either to fight a long-drawn-out suit (during which the company would be pumping oil over his land) or to give in gracefully and take what he could get. One old farmer, however, hired armed guards to watch his land, and the pipe line company, after first trying to intimidate his men and then to trick them, finally gave it up in disgust and paid him his price, besides what he had expended on his guards.

The price of refined asphalt taking a big drop, owing to the successful refining of asphalt from crude oil in California, the refinery at Cline was shut down, and the pit and crushers only were worked, to get out material for street paving. All American help was dispensed with, and the only white men left on the place were the pit-foreman, the book-keeper, and myself. The book-keeper I had was the same young English friend who had gone into the mining deal with me in Canada in 1894, when we lost our mine and our money. He had subsequently lost every penny that remained to him in one deal after another, and he wrote me from New York that he was broke. As I was under many obligations to him I sent him the funds, and he came to Cline and took charge of the office work. He seemed just as happy without a cent as he had been before with plenty, and I never heard him utter a single complaint about his lost fortune: he had real grit. Just before his arrival I had obtained three weeks' leave to go on a fishing trip, and I was to leave the pit-foreman in charge. I took my wife and boys to Corpus Christi, south of San Antonio on the Mexican Gulf, intending to leave them there for a few months' change of air. I had some misgivings about leaving the pit-foreman in charge, as he was a "periodical" drunkard; and as I had liquor in my house I locked it up before leaving, and gave the key to the Mexican store-clerk, with instructions to give it to no one except on a written order from me. I had been at Corpus Christi only three days when I got a wire from the general manager, "Return immediately." When I met him in San Antonio he told me that he had received a wire from the store-clerk, "Had bad accident, foreman drunk," and as he was too busy to go out to the mines himself he had wired for me.

The store-clerk met me at the station with a conveyance, and told me the pit-boss was armed and crazy drunk and had every one terrorised, also that there had been an accident in the pit in which a man was nearly killed. I met the pit-boss on the steps of the manager's house, and he wanted to know what I had come back for. I noticed that he had the company's 45 Colt buckled on him, the gun that was supposed to lie on my desk in the office. This I proceeded to take from him, and then went over to my house. It turned out that one of the men (disobeying strict orders), while unloading a "missed shot," started to dig out the dynamite with his iron spoon, instead of loading on top of it and so discharging the shot. When the spoon reached the cap it exploded, the charge tearing off one of his arms at the elbow and the other at the wrist. They had sent him into town in the hack, and wired for a doctor to meet him on the road. After attending to this the pit-foreman's nerve failed him, and he asked the storekeeper for the key of my house, so that he could get a drink, as he felt sick. He had found out about the liquor by the storekeeper running up to my house for a drink for the injured man. Having once started he went at it in good shape, for in four days he consumed a bottle of whisky and three gallons of Californian wine, besides about three dozen pint bottles of beer. The men in the pit got scared and refused to go to work, as there was a rumour that there were some more shots that might go off. This so enraged the foreman that he went to the office, got a Colt's 45, and going down to the pit threatened to kill any man who did not go back to work at once. In his frenzied state they were more afraid of him than they were of any possible explosion, so they went back in a hurry.

It took me some days to get things working smoothly again, and in the meantime the pit-foreman sobered up. One rainy night I had occasion to go over to the Mexican quarters to see one of the men I needed for the morrow. On my way over I saw a flash of light in the second storey of the extractor house, which went out so quickly that I thought I must have been mistaken. Still, I went over and climbed the staircase quietly, as I could hear a low murmur of voices, and wanted to catch them unawares if there was any "monkey work" going on. When I got inside, without their hearing me, I struck a match and found about twenty Mexicans, men, women, and children, camped up there, and, what was worse, smoking cigarettes. It had been the flash of a match I saw. There was a wild scramble, but I rounded them all up, and then they told me in the most artless way that the roofs of their houses leaked and so they had moved up there; utterly ignoring the fact that they were smoking in a building in which were stored 16,000 gallons of naphtha, and about 50 tons of excelsior (a sort of wood shavings) with which they had made themselves beds. This is the sort of recklessness with which one has to cope when employing Mexicans. To show how inflammable and explosive this "63" naphtha is, I will mention what I saw once. We had been emptying all the extractors of rock out of which the naphtha had not been properly distilled. We had taken out about seventy-five tons and run it out on the dump pile in cars. While unloading a car one of the men, who had a pair of O.K. shoes (miner's shoes with the soles studded with nails), jumped down the pile to get a hoe that he had dropped. There was a puff and the whole pile was on fire; he had struck a spark with his shoe. He looked for a minute like an understudy for the devil in "Faust," then beating the world's record for high and long jumps he was out with nothing worse than a singed whisker and a wholesome respect for naphtha.

West Texas is noted as a health resort for consumptives as the air is so dry, and I myself have seen some wonderful cures. One young fellow I saw helped off the train, who I thought could not live over a week or two, was, within a year, one of the best cowpunchers in the county, and could stay all day in the saddle without trouble. His case was one of perhaps fifty that I have personally known. The idea seems to be to buy a camp wagon and a couple of horses, a gun, a rifle, and fishing tackle, and go wandering round the country hunting and fishing and leading the simple life. The initial expense for a first-class outfit would not be over £50, and after that you can live for £3 to £4 per month, provided you cook for yourself. If, however, from weakness or lack of knowledge one cannot do for oneself, a man can be hired to go along, and the expense account would not pass £15, including his wages and keep. This of course does not include any luxuries, it only allows of the absolute necessaries, such as flour, bacon, salt, sugar, coffee, lard, canned milk, dried apples, and rice. Meat, fish, &c., your gun and rod supply. I and a friend once lived for three weeks, and lived well, on £1 worth of provisions. As I have before said, the country is well stocked with game, and there are fish for the catching. Lots of young fellows with weak lungs and small capital, who cannot afford to loaf, buy a few stands of bees and make a decent living, while getting well. The work is light and keeps one out of doors, as most of these bee-men live in tents. £100 will buy one hundred stands of bees, the profit of which is sufficient to keep a man in food and necessaries. It is a solitary sort of life, but if a man has sporting instincts and a longing to get well he can stand it for a year or so, by which time he is fit for harder work. The heat is great in summer, but, being very dry, does not affect one's health, and the springs, falls, and winters are delightful, all except the "Northers," of which I shall have more to say.

CHAPTER XXI

"Northers"—Almost frozen—The Mexican Indian—Cold-blooded Ingratitude—Mexican untrustworthiness.

THE chief drawback to the fine Texas climate is the "Norther" or cold north wind, that is really sometimes pretty bad. You can hear the wind roar for minutes before it reaches you, and when it strikes the temperature goes down and down. I heard a norther coming once about four o'clock in the afternoon, and ran out to the porch to look at the thermometer. It stood at 106° F., and within fifteen minutes it was 70° F. and still dropping, and by morning it was freezing. These northers seldom last over three days at a time, and they are generally followed by beautiful weather. There are about a dozen or so of them in a winter, but unless accompanied by rain they are not so bad as one might think. I was fishing on the Nueces river one Saturday night about ten o'clock for cat-fish, when I was surprised by a wet norther. I crawled with my saddle, &c., under a shelving rock and waited for the rain and hail to let up a bit. After a while I noticed that the river was rising, and as I happened to be on the wrong side from home, and the river sometimes stays up for three or four days, I had perforce to saddle up and get across while I could. When I got to the other side I could find no shelter, and as I had a good mess of fish I thought I might as well strike out for home. I did not feel the full force of the wind till I got out of the bottoms, but it was bitter when I reached the hills. I was so nearly frozen when I got home, about 2 A.M., that I could not unsaddle my horse till I had gone into the house, got a hot whisky, and warmed up.

On another occasion I was deer-hunting with a friend. We drove out in the evening in my buggy and pitched camp on a little rise where there was dry firewood, and after cooking supper we rolled up in our blankets and went to sleep. In the night a dry norther came up, and it was one of the worst I ever saw. Each pretended to be asleep so that the other should light a fire, but at last we could stand it no longer, so we both got up and built a fire. The only way we could keep from freezing was to pull the buggy up to the windward side of the fire and make a windbrake of some of our blankets tied to the wheels, so that we could sit between this and the fire. But the windbreak also acted as a chimney and sucked the smoke into our faces. When day broke we had to give up the idea of hunting. Our faces were the colour of a well-smoked ham, and our eyes so bloodshot that we could not see a deer at fifty yards. But curiously enough, one never seems to be the worse for being caught in one of these storms, and one seldom takes cold.

The average Mexican Indian is a peculiar man, and one rarely can tell what his real feelings are. They are not dependable; a man may be your friend for years and then for some slight cause or supposed insult may turn and kill you. The only real personal trouble I had at the mines came about in this way. There were two young fellows who had started with us as water-boys, and finding them intelligent I had finally raised them to drillers, and given them each charge of an Ingersoll drill. Their father was a hand-driller, and also owned a couple of wagons doing freighting for us. The family considered themselves under obligations to me, and I thought I could depend on them. One day the old man came to me (accompanied by his two boys) and said the timekeeper had made some mistake in his time, and asked me to have it rectified. Instead of sending for the timekeeper I thought I would straighten up the matter personally, as I was not very busy at the moment, and I took them into the office. While I and the old man were going over the time slips and wagon reports, the younger boy kept interrupting and putting in remarks, till he aggravated me into telling him sharply to shut up. He answered me in an insolent manner that he had come to see his father get justice and intended to do so. His father and brother tried to shut him up, and I told him that if he spoke to me like that again I would throw him out. "You will, will you?" he said, jerked out his knife, and came for me. As I reached for my gun his brother took a flying leap on to his back, and down they came at my feet struggling for the knife, which finally the elder brother took from him. When they got up I told the young man he was discharged, and would have to leave the company's property at once. The father and elder brother begged me to let him off this time. But I said to them, "You know that Manuel now has a grudge against me. I have a lot of night walking to do. Life is too short for me to have to live in fear of, or have to pull a gun on, every man who walks up behind me in the dark, so when the nervous strain reaches a certain pitch I shall either kill Manuel or he will kill me. Is it not so?" The brother and father had to agree that I was right, and I never saw Manuel again. It was a case of a mountain out of a molehill, but I could not afford to take chances, and now, after sixteen years' experience of Mexican ways, I am still convinced that I did the only thing that I could do under the circumstances.

A case of really cold-blooded ingratitude happened near Uvalde to a young fellow that I knew. There was an elderly American couple with one son, who had adopted a Mexican boy, bringing him up as a member of the family. The old man died when the boys were about nineteen years of age, leaving all he had to his wife. They had a small ranch on which they raised goats, besides having a few stands of bees. A short while after the father's death they decided to sell out their Uvalde ranch and move to Devil's River in North-west Texas, where they could get a larger ranch for their increasing flocks. They sold the ranch and were to move the next day by camp wagon, driving the goats, and taking the money (about $800) with them. The party was to consist of the mother, the son John, the Mexican boy Juan, and an old Mexican goat-herd who had worked for the family for years. The day before they were to start John went into town to get some supplies and the money, but before leaving the ranch he asked Juan if there was anything he could bring him out from town. Juan said he wanted a good bowie knife. When John, on his return, drove up to the house he handed the sheath-knife to Juan, whom he met out at the corral, and then carried the money and the things he had bought into the house. Amongst the things was a new rifle which he had bought at the last moment, and which he now loaded and put up on two nails over the lintel of the door: this act saved his life. For while he was inside, Juan went to the old goat-herd with the proposition that they two should go in and kill the two Americans, take the money, wagon, goats, and pull out for the border. "Every one will think they are gone, and there will be no hunt for them till we are safe," he said. At first the old herder thought it was all a grim joke, but when he saw it was really meant in earnest, he started for the house to warn them. The younger man was too quick for him, however, and stabbed him twice in the back before he could reach the door of the house. His cry brought John to the door, where he was met by a stab in the chest from the Mexican, who reached there at the same time. John fell in the doorway, and Juan jumped over him and made for his adoptive mother. She, however, had seen John stabbed, and, being an old frontier woman, was quick to act and full of fight. As Juan came for her she grabbed an old shot-gun from its hooks on the wall, which he also had to seize with both hands to keep its muzzle pointing away from him, and so could not make use of his knife. The old woman was strong, and the fight was desperate for possession of the old gun.

The grim joke of the thing, if joke there can be in such a tragedy, was that neither of them knew that the gun was unloaded and useless.

Meanwhile John had managed to get to his feet and reach down his Winchester, then, dropping again to the floor from weakness, he was ready for action. "Turn him loose, mother," he called, and the old lady without question turned Juan and the gun loose and got out of the line of fire. As soon as Juan saw that the tables were turned, and that John, instead of being helpless as he had thought, was armed, he dropped on his knees and prayed for his life. But all the answer he got was ten shots from the Winchester; John believed in making a good job of it. The old lady went out, caught one of the horses, and rode into town for the doctor and the sheriff. The old herder only just lived long enough to tell his tale, but John recovered. As for Juan, I think he was lucky in receiving death from the Winchester, instead of at the hands of the Uvalde citizens when they heard of the tragedy.

I have lived nearly seventeen years in daily contact with Mexicans, and I can truthfully say that there is not one of them that I know of (of the lower or working classes) with whom I would go into the hills alone with $500 in my possession, if the Mexican knew I had it and thought he could get away with it after disposing of me. Yet I like them as workmen, and get along very well with them. So I do not utterly condemn them, nor would I go as far as the clergyman who made a tour of Mexico. He was a very literal and truthful man, and on his return to the States he was asked what he thought of the Mexicans. "Is it true," he was asked, "that all the women are immoral and all the men liars and thieves?" "Well," said he, "I would hardly go as far as that, because, you see, I did not meet all of them!"

It must be remembered that the Mexican lower classes are Indians, either pure or with slight European admixture. Naturally they retain the moral code of their nation, by which the first duty is revenge for injury, however small. Ingratitude and greed are defects, perhaps, by that code, but too common to be reckoned as vices. When "wild in woods the noble savage ran," he seems from contemporary accounts to have been much like the Pathans of India's border.

CHAPTER XXII

Employed by a Paving Company—The Growth of Los Angeles—Its Land Values—A Centre for Tourists.

The Uvalde Asphalt Company started a paving company to use up their products, and, as I was getting very tired of the mines, and also seemed to have reached the maximum salary that the company would pay for my position, I applied for a job on the paving end, where I should have a pleasanter life and possibly a chance of promotion, besides learning another side of the work. The head office, however, told me that they needed me where I was, and therefore could not transfer me; and then put a green man into the position I had asked for, paying him $125 per month, while I was only getting $75! I wrote to a number of different paving companies, and the asphalt trust offered me a place as yard foreman in Los Angeles at three dollars per day, provided the Uvalde Company would give me a good letter of recommendation. The Uvalde Company then made me some vague promises as to the future, but I refused to stay, and finally they gave me a really very good letter.

So on the 26th October 1902 I left Cline, Texas (where I had worked seven years and seven months) for California. My people thought me foolish in leaving a company where I was known, and had made some small record, and in which I also held a good share, to go to another concern where I was unknown and had no friends. This may apply to England, where long service is appreciated, but it does not apply to America. Here a new man has as good or really a better show than one long in the firm's employ; in fact, when I arrived in Los Angeles, I found that I was to supersede a man who had been sixteen years in the Barber Company, and who was acting yard foreman till my arrival.

My own experience has been that if a man starts in a concern at a very low salary, he can never work up past a certain figure. I suppose it is natural to think—"This man used to work for so much a day, and we have more than doubled his salary since he has been with us, and he is an ungrateful hog if he wants more." And even if they are forced to give the amount asked for, sooner than lose the man, there is a feeling of soreness at the man's ingratitude. People rarely consider that they cannot get another man to do the same work for the same money. When I first went to Cline the foreman's salary was $125 per month, and he had no office work whatsoever to do. I started as labourer at $1.25 per day and worked up to twice that rate, or $75 per month, as foreman; at which figure I was doing not only the foreman's regular work but most of the office work as well, yet because I had started at low wages the company thought I was well paid. When I arrived in Los Angeles and reported for duty, the general manager took me over the works and introduced me to the men who were to work under me; then we returned to the office and he posted me as to my men and duties. The chief engineer (who had been acting foreman) was, he told me, an old man and trusted employee, whom, however, he could not use as foreman as he had not the ability to handle men. The manager said, "As to him, I would like you to try and get along with him, bearing in mind that he will be angry with you for taking the position which he thinks should have been his; but if you cannot get along I shall have to find another place for him." Of course I know that in such cases a new foreman has to prove himself to his men before they will look up to him and readily recognise his authority. I was young, and the men would begin to take liberties unless I could show them that "I knew where I was at," as they said in Texas. Luckily for me, my opportunity came at once, for I had noticed on going over the plant with the manager, one improvement that would do away with a lot of unnecessary work in connection with the screening of the different grades of gravel and sand. I made my proposal of a change to Mr. Arthur, the general manager, and he asked the opinion of the chief engineer, who happened to be near. The latter at once laughed at the idea and said it was impracticable. I insisted, and said I would stake my job on the result, and then Mr. Arthur told me to go ahead. I took some of the men and tore down the screens and rigged one the way I had proposed, and it turned out the success I had predicted. This was sufficient for all the men, except the prejudiced engineer, that I knew my business; and they all seemed friendly disposed with the exception of him and the mixer-man (the man who had charge of the mixing of the paving material). One day one of the men said to me, "I guess you are all right, so I want to warn you to look out for Harry Kern (the engineer) and 'Old George' (the mixer-man), who are doing all they can against you; the former at the office and the latter amongst the men." I soon had proof of this, for one day the cashier (a great friend of Harry's) came out of the office and spoke to me most offensively about some reports which he wanted me to make at once for him. I told him to get back to his office, that I allowed nobody to boss me in my own yard so long as I was foreman; that seemed to settle him, and then I took the bull by the horns and went to see Harry, to whom I talked like a "Dutch uncle." I told him it could do him no good if they made it unpleasant enough to make me resign, as he would never get the job of foreman; that I had not known of the state of affairs when I came or might have stayed out; but, as I had come, we must work together in harmony or he would have to go somewhere else. He took it well, and we afterwards became great friends. Old George, of course, I had to handle in a different way, so I jumped him on the first pretext, and, as I expected, he gave me impudence in order to show off before the other men. I had a monkey wrench in my hand, and I told him that he would apologise or I would beat him good and plenty and then fire him. He owned up that he had been hasty, and so we let it go at that. Old George was one of the best men I had on the place after we got to understand one another, and after I left the company and came to Mexico he wanted to come along with me.

Los Angeles is one of the most wonderful towns in the United States, and the growth is phenomenal. It is essentially a tourist town, being practically supported by the tourists who come there to spend the winter, and by men who have retired from business and wish to end their days in a decent climate. It is estimated to have over 60,000 transient population. In 1900 the real estate men put up "prophecy boards" all over the town saying "in 1910 Los Angeles will have a population of 250,000," and every one laughed at them. In 1907 they scratched out the "2" and put a "3" over it, as the population was then about 275,000, and is to-day over 350,000. In 1893 a German bought for $800 a tract of sage brush and sand in what is now "Boyle Heights," and went to work at his trade of carpenter to make a living and pay the taxes. He had grit and held on, finally selling out for some $200,000. One of our men in the Barber Yard bought a small cottage for $1400 and within six months was offered $2000 for it, which I advised him to refuse; judging from the value of other property in the same neighbourhood, it is worth to-day at least $8000.

Fortunes have been lost in real estate in Los Angeles, but for the past eleven years it has been going up by leaps and bounds. Yet all wonder what keeps it up, as there are practically no manufactures, and though it is surrounded by orange and lemon orchards, those fruits are taken by buyers from the east and shipped there direct, so that there are few, if any, local middlemen. But there is, as I said before, a large influx of the wealthy class of tourists, and these leave an immense amount of money in the city. Besides, there are a number of the millionaire class from the eastern states who winter there. One striking feature is the great number of small detached cottages, with beautiful gardens, owned chiefly by the mechanics and labouring men of the city. Los Angeles is sometimes called the city of cottages. Most of these small five- and six-roomed cottages, quite up-to-date with all the latest conveniences and improvements, and costing from $1200 to $2000 each, are being or have been paid for on the instalment plan. Of course they are sometimes forfeited, but if one has paid enough to make it worth while, one can generally sell one's equity if unwilling or unable to continue the payments. I knew a labouring man who in this way acquired three houses. He earned $2.50 per day in our yard as blacksmith, and his wife earned about the same amount as seamstress; they were childless and were saving for old age. As soon as they had a house paid for they rented it out, and with this rent and their savings commenced to buy another one. They expect, when they have enough houses, to retire and live on their rentals, looking after their property. As

Los Angeles caters for the tourist trade, one can hire hundreds of houses of all sizes and prices, completely furnished even to bed and table linen, table and kitchen ware.

Another thing that strikes the visitor is the street car system, claimed—and rightly, I think—to be the finest in the world. One can get a car to any part of the city, or to any of the suburban towns or seaside resorts (called beaches), at intervals of from three to ten minutes, according to the importance of the line. There are good roads out of Los Angeles, and in fact all over California, and the city itself has very fine asphalt streets. In consequence, the wealthy bring their automobiles, and also almost every labouring man has his bicycle to take him to and from his work. At 6 P.M. Spring Street and Broadway are a sight to see with the streams of bicycles and motor cycles wending their way homewards. In the evenings, in front of the cheap five and ten cent theatres (where really good vaudeville entertainments are given), the library, and the Y.M.C.A. rooms, I have seen bicycles five and six deep against the curb; it is quite a job to pick out your own amongst the hundreds of others.

These cheap theatres are a great institution and play to crowded houses all night long. They tried to start a palm garden theatre where one could smoke, but it did not turn out a success owing to the chill of the evening making it unpleasant to sit outside. In the other houses they prohibit smoking.

During the winter, too, the horse races, which last for a couple of months, bring lots of people and money to the town, which has also become quite a centre of boxing. Boating, fishing, and sea bathing are to be had at any of the numerous beaches about twenty minutes' car ride from the centre of the city, so that forms of amusement are plentiful.

CHAPTER XXIII

"Graft"—Seeking Contracts in Los Angeles—In Charge of Street Work—Crooked Business.

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S *Coniston* and *Mr. Crewe's Career* explain the methods of bosses and railway presidents, and their conflicts or combinations for the robbing of the public in America. For the railways it may perhaps be said that they have to protect themselves against the "Bosses," and for the "Bosses" that they are what the people make them: at any rate, I need not discuss the forms of that business immorality against which Mr. Roosevelt has struggled. But I will try to give some idea of the rottenness of the contracting business and the city officials, and truly it was awful. But what can be expected when contractors make their men scoundrels in order to hold their jobs, and teach them to rob the public, and then are horrified when they are robbed or cheated by their own men! Then the men, many of whom have no idea of honour, are all the time trying to hurt one another in order to show up well with the company; of this I shall say more later on. Those who are inclined to seek fortune in America must reckon with such difficulties.

Los Angeles is a very expensive town to live in, and I soon found that financially I had not made a change for the better. But I was gaining in experience in my business, and being in a city, had a better chance to look for openings than I had when cut off from the world, as I was out at the Uvalde Mines. A good part of my work consisted in going round town keeping track of all building and improvement work going on, and trying to get contracts for paving cellars, driveways, and warehouse floors; in fact, anything I could obtain. For this purpose the company gave me the use of a horse and dog-cart. I would see a fine house going up, try to find the architect, get the specifications, and, if asphalt was mentioned, would put in a bid on the spot. I was given a free hand as to prices, the only condition being that the work should show some profit, and, in case the other companies had put in a bid, I was to cut their bid if I could do it without showing a decided loss. In the case of a very big job, or something that might lead to more work, I referred to Mr. Arthur, who would sometimes take the work even at a loss, to keep the other fellow from getting it. This does not sound like good business, but our company was the largest, and could stand a small loss if Mr. Arthur could keep the other fellow without work, so that his pay-roll should eat him up. We could stand the game longer than they except for politics. Of this and our final downfall I shall write in another chapter.

After I had been some months with the company my salary was raised to $3.50 per day, and I was put in charge of the work on the street, and turned the yard over to a man who came down from a branch in San Francisco. The company employed at this time in Los Angeles, beside the general manager, two superintendents, myself as foreman of the asphalt gang, and a yard foreman to whom I had given over charge of that job. Some weeks after the change this man Bister asked me to come up to his room as he wanted to see me about something important. One night I did go, and he informed me that he had heard that the company was going to cut operating expenses, and some of us would be let out as soon as the present rush of work was over. One of the superintendents, Mr. Weber, was drinking, he said, and he proposed that I should join himself and the other superintendent, Cressfield, to get Weber discharged; in return for which Cressfield would guarantee our jobs to Bister and me. I never found out if he had any authority from Cressfield to make me such a proposition, but in order to clinch me, he said that Weber had been speaking rather disparagingly about my work. I laughed at him and told him that I wanted no hand in the fight as I was not interested enough, and that when the company wanted my job back they could have it. Finally, however, they dragged me into the fight against my will, but on the opposite side to that he wanted me to join.

Weber and Cressfield were each in charge of a contract, and my gang did the asphalt work for both of them, so that I worked part of the week for one and part of the week for the other. Cressfield asked me to put his brother on as a skilled tamperman at $2.25 per day, but after he had worked a few days I found that he was not skilled, and the other men would have kicked if I had paid him as a skilled tamperman. I told Cressfield that I could not keep him on as tamperman, but would keep him as a labourer, if he wished, at $1.75. Cressfield did not seem much put out, but told me I was too particular. He took his brother on his concrete gang, where, of course, he had nothing to do with me, though I had made an enemy of him, a fact I was made to feel in a hundred different ways. Weber, on the other hand, tried to help me in as many ways, even when I refused to join him in some of the schemes he was working. Mr. Arthur seemed to be the only man who really was absolutely square, and his principles were such as do not help a man in contracting business in the States.

Some time before I came to the company the foreman of one of the street railway companies in the city had come to Mr. Arthur with a proposition to turn over to him the contract for all the company's business for a term of two years if Arthur would give him $2000 as a bonus. Arthur replied that he had already put up a bid lower than any other company, and if he could not get the work by a fair bid he did not want it at all; and, furthermore, that he (Arthur) would report the conversation to the owners of the railway line. He did so, but the owners would not listen to him; they said that it was impossible: the man had been in their employ for a number of years, and they trusted him completely. Later on this man was found out and discharged, but through political pull he got the position of chief inspector of the Public Works Department. This occurred shortly after I went on to the street business. The first intimation I got was when we had a new inspector sent out to stay with my gang, and this man from the very first day proceeded to condemn our material, our work, me, and my men; we could do nothing right. I had a great friend in the Public Works Department, a member of my Order, and to him I went at once to see what it all meant. He told me, " You had better get out from under, as the word is out to kill Arthur (in a business sense), and we can only hit him through you fellows. There is nothing personal to you in this, but move while you can." I could not of course repeat this to Arthur, but I went and told him that the inspector was most unreasonable, and asked him what I should do about it. He told me not to give way to the inspector, and that he would back me in anything reasonable.

I went back to the street and told the inspector that he must not interfere with my men any more, but, if he had complaints to make, to make them to me. He got impudent, and I requested him to take off his spectacles (in California and some other states it is a most serious offence to strike a man with glasses on his nose); he dashed off to a telephone and sent for the street superintendent; I went to another telephone and sent for Arthur. When they both arrived on the scene the inspector stated that I had threatened to assault him for doing his duty. I told the street superintendent that the man was interfering with my men, contrary to rules, and had been abusive to me. The upshot of it was that the superintendent told me that if I could not get along with the man from his office he would "Call me off public work" (the law gives this power to the street superintendent, and any man called off can work on no further public work in that city). During all this Arthur sat in his buggy and never said a word. After it was over I went across to him and offered my resignation, but he asked me to stay on till the job in hand was through.

CHAPTER XXIV

Bribery and corruption—The Good Government League—Servant problem in California—The climate and its effect on wages—Off to Guadalajara.

My resignation being refused, I decided to stay and finish up the streets we were on. Of course after this the inspector had it all his own way, and he certainly led us a dance. I continued to look out for other work, and one day the chief sewer inspector told me that he could give us all the repaving work in connection with the sewers if there was anything in it for him. I reported this to my superintendent, and was told to give the inspector ten per cent., and the cashier told me the same thing. Arthur, I knew, would not have allowed it had he known it, but I was ordered not to report to him. The barefaced bribery, robbery, and swindling that went on in Los Angeles, in fact, in any town I knew anything about in the United States, was really surprising. However, I understand that so far as California is concerned all this has been changed since the prosecution and conviction of Reuff and Smidt, Mayor of San Francisco, and the formation of the Good Government League. A contractor was at the absolute mercy of the city officials and dared not say them nay; it was not that he wished to bribe but it was forced upon him if he hoped to remain in business at all. The same applied to his superintendents and foremen; if they were not ready to supply cigars and drinks for the inspectors their work would turn out so unsatisfactory that they did not hold their jobs long.

Between the city officials and the labour unions the contractor had a bad time. Los Angeles had not much trouble as far as the labour unions were concerned, but San Francisco was practically run by the unions during Mayor Smidt's time (the man mentioned above), he himself being a union man. I do not mean to infer that I am against organised labour, for in many cases that is their sole defence against starvation wages. But when the unions allow such men as the Macnamara brothers (just convicted of the *Times* Building dynamiting) to guide their destinies, they cannot expect the outsider to sort the sheep from the goats. In "Frisco" a delegate came every day from the Labour Council to visit your gangs, and would order you to discharge any man who did not belong to their Order; if you complied they sent you men in the place of those discharged, and if you refused they posted you as "unfair," and you could not get men. They called off the union bricklayers on a building once because we were working non-union men laying asphalt in the cellar. We told them that there was no such thing as an asphalt union in Los Angeles, so that the men could not belong to it, but this made no difference to them. So we had to wait till the building was completed, and then go back and finish the asphalt work. I have heard of some extraordinary lengths to which they would carry their "unfair list," though I will not vouch for the following story, but tell it as it was told to me: A walking delegate came to notify a doctor that he was on the "unfair list." The doctor was surprised, as he had always been most careful to deal in stores with union clerks, to pay his servants union wages, &c. The delegate said, "You have been attending Martin Brady who is ill with pneumonia." "Yes," said the doctor, "but I found out first that he was in good standing with the union." The delegate replied that "Brady got his cold through getting wet at a farmer's pump, and we have found out that the pump was not union made."

The servant-girl problem is worse in California than in any other place I have ever been to; they get wages running from $25 to $50 per month, and in consequence are as independent as can be. My wife got ill, so I went to one of the employment bureaus to see about a girl, and passed through the ordeal of my life. One woman I spoke to asked me how many there were in the family, and what I did for a living, and then, when I told her the house had only five rooms (as an inducement, I thought), she turned to me and said, "Five rooms, indeed, and I would like to know where you could put a girl!" One girl that came said, "I am so glad to see you have a piano as I do love to play in the evenings." They tell of a Swedish girl whose mistress asked her, the first morning after she had arrived, if the table was laid for breakfast. The girl replied, "Everytang bane laid but the aigs, and I don't tank dat bane part of ma job."

The climate of Los Angeles is much better than that of San Francisco, but it is not all that it is cracked up to be. The winters are much damper than in Texas, and though the summers are fine there are very bad dust storms at times, and it gets very hot indeed. But the residents resent complaint of their weather, as they think it is the finest on earth, and you can hardly blame them, for the climate is what brings most of the money to the town. And certainly it produced some of the finest and healthiest-looking men and women it has ever been my luck to see. This question of climate has a curious effect on the labour market. So many young fellows of large brain but weak bodies have flocked to the town that an office man cannot approach the wages paid to a labourer or a mechanic; good office men could be got for from $40 to $50 per month at the time when labourers could get $1.75 per day, carpenters $3.50 for eight hours' work, and masons $6.50 per day. I had a negro raker working under me who was getting the same salary as myself, and we had a cement sidewalk finisher who was drawing more pay per week than the superintendent.

The yard foreman and I soon fell out, for the inspector was condemning the material he sent up, and, as I could not say anything, it was sent back to the yard. The yard foreman, to get even, would report more stuff sent up than I had received, and finally things got to such a pass that when we got the first of the streets finished I left. The day after I resigned I was riding up town on my bicycle when I met the manager of our big rival company. He stopped me and asked if it was true that I had left the Barber people. When I told him so he asked me if I would work for him. I refused, saying that I was sick of Los Angeles and the trouble with the street department, and had the offer of a position in Boston. He told me that if I worked for them I would have no further trouble with the street department, and he would give me the same salary as I had been getting, besides a bonus on any exceptionally good work. So the next day found me at work for the rival concern, and it was like coming into a harbour from a storm at sea. This concern had been making friends with the powers that ruled while Arthur had been making enemies, and the inspectors helped instead of hindering the work. If any of us were called away for a time the inspector would take hold of the gang and look after things till one returned. I was surprised, till I found out that they were one and all on the company's pay-roll, besides what the city paid them for looking after the city's interests. Thus the public was robbed; but this form of robbery is so common that the public seems to expect it, and can hardly realise such a thing as an honest contractor or honest public officials.

I was getting pretty sick of all this trickery, and was glad, a couple of months later, to hear of a new company formed in Los Angeles who were looking for a man to go down to Mexico to take charge of a contract they had there. I reckoned that conditions would be so different there that things might be run on the square. I went to the manager and president of the new company and applied for the position of superintendent.

He took me in his auto and we went over the different jobs I had done, with which he seemed satisfied. So we signed a contract for six months at $4.50 per day, which was to be raised at the end of six months if everything was satisfactory. I then went to see the manager of the company I was with and told him of the offer. He told me he did not wish to stand in my way if I wished to go, and that if I did not like Mexico he would try to place me again if I cared to come back; but that owing to the keen competition in Los Angeles they could not offer me a higher salary. So on 4th September 1904 I left Los Angeles for Guadalajara, Mexico, the second largest city in the republic (population 130,000).

Poor Arthur, they got him a few months after I left the city, as, being an honourable man, he was unable to make a single contract pay; so the Barber Company dismissed him to make way for a new man who had no enemies in the city. Arthur followed in my footsteps, and went to work for the company which he had been fighting for so many years. A few months later came the elections, and the street superintendent was himself turned out of office (if only Arthur could have outlasted him!), and immediately started a paving company of his own to fight the other two; and owing to his general crookedness and knowledge of the political ropes of the town he seems to be making a success of it. The Barber Company is an immense corporation with hundreds of branches and dozens of different names to work under, but its most desperate fight has always been with its own men, who turn and rend it.

CHAPTER XXV

The Barber Company—Guadalajara—Mexican mendacity—Don Miguel Ahumada—His humanity and justice.

I THINK I can safely say that twenty per cent. of the opposition the Barber Company gets in the States is from men who were formerly in its employ. This is right enough in most cases, but in some that I have known it was done in a most underhand way. A manager of one of the branches gets well acquainted with all the politicians in his town or district by the judicious use of the company's entertainment fund, then, when there is some exceptional contract coming up, he gets some of these politicians to go into a new company, obtains funds from his friends, and the Barber Company not only loses the contract but there is an opposition formed with strong political backing which must eventually be beaten or bought out. Somehow this sort of thing is not looked down upon by business men as it should be, who will pardon almost anything if it is "cute." Here are two stories which illustrate cute business methods. A certain lawyer was suing the city for damages for his client, who had fallen through a defective culvert and injured himself.

He won his case, and sent word to his client to come and get the money. When his client arrived he handed him $1, and told him the jury had awarded $1000. "What is this?" asked the client. "That is what is left after deducting cost of appeal, my fee, and some other expenses," returned the lawyer. "Yes, I understand that," said the client, who was a business man, "but what was wrong with this dollar that you have given it to me?" They tell of the Yankee salesman during slavery times who was travelling through the South. A southern planter lent him a horse to ride on to the next town, and sent along a negro boy to bring the horse back. Some time later, neither the horse nor the boy having returned, he sent in to town to see what had happened. His messenger met the boy on the street and asked him why he had not brought the horse back yet. The boy replied that the Yank had sold the horse. "Well, why did not you come back and let us know?" asked the messenger. "Cause he done sold me too!" So any trickery, if it is clever and works successfully, is never thought much of, but is laughed at as a good joke. Of course this is only my particular experience of business methods. I may have been unfortunate in having met a certain class, those interested in contracting, and city and government officials.

I was glad to leave Los Angeles, which I did in company with the assistant manager of the new company I had joined, and my new yard foreman. Before going further, I must say that the views stated above have changed much since coming to Mexico and meeting American gentlemen in the contracting business. I have never been asked to do crooked work, and, on the contrary, my orders have always been to do the best work possible under the specifications.

After passing the Mexican border at El Paso the journey lies for the first hundred miles or so through a dreary sandy waste till one reaches Torreon, which, owing to its irrigation canals, is the centre of a very fine farming district. The town possesses large smelters, a white-lead works, and a glycerine and dynamite factory. And this is the town where in Madero's late revolution 303 poor unhappy Chinamen were slaughtered in cold blood! The next place of importance is Zacatecas, one of the largest mining centres in the Mexican republic, with mines, now being worked, that were worked by the Spaniards some three hundred years ago. Its cathedral, perched up on the top of the mountain, was all lighted up for some great church *fiesta*; a very pretty sight, visible for miles after we had passed the town. From Irapuata a branch line runs to Guadalajara. The country here changes entirely as one enters the State of Jalisco, known as the granary of Mexico. Guadalajara itself is a fine old Mexican city, in the centre of an immense fertile plain, at an elevation of 5200 feet. It is a town that has always been against the Liberals, being the great centre of the Clerical Party, and consequently the Federal Government under Diaz never did much to help it. Juarez was nearly assassinated here, and General Diaz was hissed by the people when he went up there some twelve years ago. It has a beautiful cathedral, and churches are to be found in almost every block of the centre of the town. It is a very sleepy place, distinguished for this even in a land where the people are accustomed to take life easily; things have, however, changed much in the last eight years.

There are certain ways hard to get accustomed to in this country. One is the habit of lying, not maliciously, but that lying to keep you in a good humour which is practised by all classes. For instance, you go into an office and ask for a certain person who happens to be out. You ask when he will be back, and the reply is invariably, "Please sit down, he will be back in a moment." In fact, they lead you to suppose that they are astonished that he has not already returned. And all the time they know that he has gone home, and left word that he would not return! I have been to a foundry to get delivery of work promised me by the owner on his "word of a gentleman," by the following day (which he knew, and I knew, could not possibly be done), and I have finally got the work delivered three weeks later, after going up and cursing him twice a week. I have asked for work long overdue, been met at the door and told that I must have missed it on the way there as it had just left for the factory, while all the time it was still unfinished. Then there is the siesta habit indulged in by all Mexicans, though foreigners do not follow the custom or find it at all necessary to health. From 1 P.M. till 3 P.M. all business is stopped, not a store is open or an office. Another trouble is stealing; it seems to come natural to a Mexican of the lower classes to steal. Then, if he can, the Mexican does everything in the opposite way to any one else. I have heard it said that the only thing they do the same as other people is digging a well, because they do not know how to start at the bottom; but this is an exaggeration. When a Mexican gives his address he puts the street first and the number afterwards; their exclamation marks are used upside down, and the query mark is like this ¿. If they are going to pull down an old house and build a new one, they build the new one inside the old one, and only pull down as it becomes necessary; they saw with the teeth of the saw away from them, and other things too numerous to mention.

Guadalajara claims to have the cheapest electrical power on the continent (six cents the kilowatt hour), and in consequence it is an important manufacturing town, having cotton mills, flour mills, two or three foundries, soap factory, a smelter, sugar refineries, three breweries, whisky distillery, and other industries. The schools also are good, and it has an engineering and medical college and two industrial schools, one for boys and one for girls. The city was founded in 1541 by Nuño de Guzman. It has a climate far surpassing that of Los Angeles, and, if it were only known, it would become a great centre of tourist travel. Now that the line is built to Manzanillo on the Pacific coast, it is easy to reach Guadalajara from any of the Pacific coast ports in the United States or Canada. Close to Guadalajara are the falls of Juanacatlan, called the Niagara of Mexico (575 feet long and 400 feet high). Within twenty miles is Lake Chapala, about fifty miles long and five to ten broad, which affords good duck, goose, and snipe shooting, though practically no fishing, as the only fish are German carp and catfish, neither of which are game fish.

There are also a few deer, bear, and mountain lion to be had, if one has time and patience and is a good climber. The quail have been practically exterminated, as have also the rabbits.

The government of the country has been a benevolent despotism; and as this was the method of the Federal Government while in the hands of General Diaz, so also it was that of each governor in his particular state. It has not as yet had time to change much under Madero, but I think it will do so gradually, as the people get accustomed to their civic rights and demand them. They have a congress, it is true, both in the States and the Federal one, but these are more for show than anything else. The Mexicans have a story they are fond of telling in regard to this. A woman once went to see the governor to get an appointment for her son. The governor said, "I will put him in as a clerk." "But," said the woman, "he cannot read or write." The governor then said he would make him a captain of police. Said the woman, "He cannot ride, and the truth is he is a little feeble-minded." "Then," asked the governor, "what do you want me to make him, and what is he fitted for?" The woman replied, "I thought he would make a good congressman!"

This form of government seems just suited to the people, and I have heard Mexicans of standing, even since the revolution, say that they were not fitted to govern themselves, but needed a strong man at the head, and this is the main cry against Madero, the present president. Every Thursday afternoon the governor holds a public audience, at which any one can attend, and if he has a grievance he can state it ; the governor will look into it and, if possible, set it right, sometimes even overruling police magistrates' or judges' orders. It is an experience to attend one of these audiences and see people of every grade who come for justice or to have some grievance attended to. It is the *Nousherwan* ideal of Asia, but as little capable of being realised there as here ; better, nevertheless, than India's *Vakil ka Raj* (lawyers' rule), according to the Bengali writer, Mr. Mitra. Of course the whole system hinges on having an honest governor like Don Miguel Ahumada of Guadalajara, as in the hands of a dishonest man it is a great lever for blackmail.

Such men as our governor, Colonel Don Miguel Ahumada, are hard to find in this country—in fact any country might be proud to claim him. He was a man of about six feet four inches tall, with chest and shoulders in proportion, wore a black imperial and large curled-up moustache, his forehead was high and broad, and, though his face was a trifle hard, there were lines of humour round his eyes and mouth. He was a man of the old school, like his great leader Diaz. He was honest, absolutely just (rich and poor looked alike to him), had a keen sense of humour, very proud, but a thorough democrat. I have seen him walking the streets in the early morning, unattended, and stopping to chat and ask questions of the street-sweepers, the small street-corner vendors, beggars, and whomsoever he met who he thought might have information of use to him. Thus he kept in touch with the needs of the poor, and heard of abuses and petty thievery amongst the city's employees. I could give hundreds of instances of his humanity and justice, but will content myself with one. On one occasion a widow came to him with the following tale: Her husband when dying had left all the property to her, but had asked a trusted friend of his to arrange all the details of succession and so forth. This friend, through one excuse or another, kept affairs strung out for a year or more, and then demanded sundry thousands of dollars for his work. Don Miguel (as every one called him) sent for the fellow and told him to bring all the deeds, inventories, &c., with him. When he arrived, Don Miguel took all the papers, &c., and, after putting a fair valuation on the work done, paid the man as many hundreds as he had demanded thousands, and turned everything else over to the widow.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Mexican workman—His remembrance of a grudge—The *Commissaria*—Private feuds—American *versus* English.

As a workman the Mexican is surprisingly good, considering the poor food they are able to buy with the small wages they get. They have not much initiative, but can be taught to do almost anything and do it well. A few years ago American mechanics could command almost any salary in Mexico, but now Mexicans can do for themselves, and Americans would starve on the salary. When I arrived I had not one single man who had ever seen asphalt laid before, or knew anything about a plant. I had plans with me, and we went to work and put up the plant. Then I had to teach my yard foreman (an American) the first principles of the asphalt business. I got up at three each morning and started up the plant, then went to the street with the first load and showed the men how to lay it, and did the rolling myself. I soon found, though, that I could not keep this up, so we wired to the States for a roller-man and a raker. And with these two men, who understood their branch of the work, I managed to get through the first season and complete a contract for $84,000. The yard foreman picked up his end in an astonishing short time, and after the first job that end gave me very little trouble.

We were about two-thirds through the work when I noticed that my two Americans were acting sulkily and hanging back, till finally it came one day to a climax and they both went on strike. The cause of the strike was so trivial that I thought there must be something more behind, but did not find it out till some months afterwards. A short while after I came here the company had got a superintendent for their Mexico City branch from New York, and this rollerman and raker were men who had worked for him there. It seems that he had arranged with them to make trouble for me so that I should not finish the work, and then he could get a man of his own in my place. However, in the middle of the trouble he was caught padding the company's pay-roll, and just escaped arrest by getting out of the country. This broke up the strike, and I was able to finish up and get rid of my men, who had done one good thing for me—and that was to break in a crew of Mexicans, with whom I have done the work ever since.

I early had trouble with the men stealing tools, and soon found that the only way was to charge whatever tools were missing amongst the whole crew. This kept the thieving within bounds, as the innocent men watched the guilty, though they would never tell on them, as this was against their code of honour. This does not hold good in every case, and lucky for us it did not. We had a gatekeeper whom we trusted implicitly, giving him duplicate keys for the office, storerooms, &c. Well, he and the night-watchman fell out. One morning the latter came to me and asked me to make the *portero* give him back $3 that he had of his. I told him that I could not interfere with their private quarrels. He said, "But he stole the money from me." I still told him that I would not interfere. "But," said he, "he is stealing from you also." I think this really slipped out in the heat of anger. I asked him who else knew about the matter, and had all witnesses at once taken to the *Commissaria*. There they were forced to tell their tale and sign their names to their declaration. We then had the *portero* tried, convicted, and sentenced to six years and four months in the penitentiary.

A Mexican seldom forgets a grudge, and the day he got out this man found and tried to kill the old night-watchman, and I later met him in Chihuahua dressed as a soldier, and he told me he had got a five-year term in the army. I have known of cases of men getting stabbed, and yet denying that they knew the man who had done it, hoping when well to be able to revenge themselves, as they only believe in personal vengeance and dislike the law to step in. One of my stable hands had trouble with some man, and one night there was a tap at the stable door (he slept in the grain-room); when he poked out his head to see who it was he was slashed with a knife from ear to ear. He recovered, but never would tell who did it, saying that he had not seen; yet I have no doubt that matter has been settled ere now. Another of our men had a fight to which there were two eye-witnesses, one of whom told me how the whole affair came off. Yet when the man was arrested both swore that they knew nothing about it and had never seen any fight. The man was held four months for evidence and then turned out. I suppose, morally, I should have told what I knew, but it is a good axiom in this country never to volunteer information to the police, as you will surely be held in jail as an important witness. As a very friendly judge once said to a friend of mine, "My dear sir, you know too much." My friend at once took the hint and immediately forgot everything he had been trying to tell.

Americans seem to have an idea that Englishmen have no sense of humour, and are very fond of telling stories at our expense. To illustrate the cleverness of an American over an Englishman, they tell of the American over in England who insisted in smoking in a "non-smoking," first-class carriage. An Englishman in the carriage, who had protested in vain, finally called the guard. When the guard arrived the American quickly spoke first. "Guard," he said, "this gentleman is riding in a first-class carriage on a third-class ticket." Investigation proved this to be true, and the irate Englishman was ejected. One of the spectators asked the American how he had known that the Englishman only had a third-class ticket. "Well," said the American, "I happened to see a corner of it sticking out of his waistcoat pocket and noticed that it was the same colour as my own." But I have also heard a story of an American from the interior, unfamiliar with crustacea, who was doing England. By way of seeing life he lunched at the Savoy on the day of his arrival, and, settling himself at a table, prepared to enjoy a hearty meal. Some celery in a glass was placed before him, which he ate whole without much satisfaction. But the second course—a crab in mayonnaise—was too much for him. Beckoning the waiter to him, he said, "Say, I've eaten your bouquet, but I'm damned if I'll eat that bug." Mexicans also are great story-tellers, but their humour is so peculiar that one has to be a Mexican to understand and appreciate it. But then their way of looking at things is so different from ours. They think a boxing match a most brutalising sport, and will hardly allow even amateur boxing exhibitions in the country; yet they think bull-fighting is elevating, and can see absolutely no harm in it. Whereas to most foreigners one bull-fight is all that they can stand.

Neither Americans nor Mexicans here show much interest in any but local affairs. Of course educated men know something of European matters, but the ignorance of some Americans on such a subject as India is surprising. A doctor here argued with me the other day that "Hindu" simply meant the race, and "Mohammedan" was their religion; and he tried to prove it by saying they got the name "Hindu" from "Hindustan," the name of the country, as Englishman from England, and that the religion of the Hindu race was Mohammedan. Yet he is an educated American professional man!

CHAPTER XXVII

Bull-fighting—Mexican etiquette—The police department and its difficulties—Treatment of habitual criminals—The army.

THERE is one kind of bull-fighting that I have often attended and thoroughly enjoyed. In the first act they bring out a young bull, or steer, which is then roped and thrown, and a thick rope is put around its body just behind its forelegs. A man mounts it while it is on the ground (barebacked) and holds on to this rope. The bull is then allowed to get up, and the idea is to see how long the rider can stick on. I have seen many horses buck, but a fighting bull can give a horse points, as he has some steps that are entirely his own, and few men stay with him very long. When the rider is thrown, others rush in with *capas* (red capes) and attract the bull away from his fallen foe before he can do any damage. In the next act they set up a sort of a "giant's stride" right in front of the bull-chute. A bull is then turned in, and when he charges the man makes a run, swings out, and over the bull. It is certainly exciting and pretty risky work. One time I was there the bull charged, and as the man started for him and sailed up into the air, the bull stopped in astonishment right in the man's descending course. There was nothing for it, so the man stiffened himself, stuck out his feet, and landed square on the side of the bull's head, turning him head over heels. They both got on their feet about the same time, and the bull chased the man round the pole so rapidly that it was some time ere he could make use of his rope to swing again.

Another form in which they do this act is using a pole and pole-vaulting over the charging bull. In the next act they have an enormous Mexican, all padded out like an American football player. The bull is turned in (generally a young two-year-old), and he plays with it for a while with the *capa*, till he gets his distance; then he suddenly lunges forward and, with his chest against the bull's horns, leans over and grabs the animal round the neck. Then there is a tussle indeed, but the man seems easily to hold his own, and finally, when he has tired the bull, he lies down on his back, pulling the bull's head down with him, and, taking off his hat, waves it at the crowd. This also is not so easy as it sounds, and is sometimes dangerous, for I once saw a young bull scratch with his hind-legs like a cat, and he was not long in pulling the stuffing off his opponent. He probably would have killed the man, but assistants are always ready, and they dashed in and pulled the bull off by main strength. In other cases, when the man is through his act he suddenly releases the bull, springs to one side, and waves the *capa* in the bull's face. The show ends with acrobatic and other performances, and is well worth seeing. On one occasion they let any of the public who wished to do so go in and play with the bull; when the bugle blew about one hundred peons jumped into the ring with their red blankets, and the fun was furious for a short time, as the bull would charge one and then another, finally tossing two or three of them who could not get out of his way, but without serious consequences. Most Mexicans of the lower classes are would-be bull-fighters, and the great game amongst the Mexican children is "bull-fighting"; one boy represents the bull and the others the matadores, picadores, &c., and when the bull pokes one of the others in the ribs he is supposed to be out. An American lady here had a very cross Jersey bull in a corral. Some lads from sixteen to eighteen years were baiting him, but, as they were not experts, he killed three of them before they decided to leave him alone.

Mexicans in some ways are very polite and look upon Americans as boors; and truly a great many of them are so, especially the tourists, whom I have seen going into the churches here with their cameras, when mass was being said, and other things equally outrageous. The Mexican takes off his hat to his gentlemen friends as well as to the ladies; he shakes hands with everybody (whether known to him or not) when entering or leaving an office, and does not put on his hat till he leaves the building; he will generally give you the inside of the side-walk if he meets you on the street (always to a lady). I have seen two of them arguing for quite a while on meeting as to who was to give the other the inside. All this to his men acquaintances; on the other hand, he will stare in the rudest way at any pretty woman he may meet in the street or in a street-car, and I have often been tempted to punch their heads. He will stand on the street-corner with a knot of friends taking up the whole side-walk and making everybody who passes walk round them in the street. Their ideas of politeness are so contradictory that I have never been quite able to make them out. When they have a row it is considered quite gentlemanly to beat your opponent over the head and shoulders with your cane, but to strike him with your fist is a deadly insult. The following are a few of the main rules of Mexican etiquette, for the benefit of those who might visit this country: Ladies do not attend funerals. Children kiss the hands of their parents. The hostess is served first at a Mexican table. The bridegroom purchases his bride's trousseau. Women friends kiss on both cheeks when greeting or taking leave. Gentlemen bow first when passing lady acquaintances in the street. The sofa is the seat of honour, and a guest waits to be invited to occupy it. Men and women in the same social circles call each other by their first names. When a Mexican speaks to you of his home he refers to it as "your house." When you move into a new locality, it is your duty to make the first neighbourhood calls. When friends pass each other in the street without stopping they say *adios* (goodbye). Young ladies do not receive calls from young men, and are not escorted to entertainments by them. Daily inquiry is made for a sick friend, and cards are left, or the name written in a book, with the porter. Dinner calls are not customary, but upon rising from the table the guest thanks his host for the entertainment. Mexican gentlemen remove their hats as scrupulously on entering a business office as in a private residence. If in riding costume one must remove one's spurs—this applies more especially to government offices. Often on entering a house the owner will ask you to keep on your hat (this, however, you are not supposed to agree to), and this is meant to make you feel as much at home as if you were the owner. After a dance a gentleman returns his partner to the seat beside her parents or chaperon and at once leaves her side. Never allow a caller to carry a package of any size from your house; always send it to his home: Mexicans do not carry parcels. If you change your residence you must notify your Mexican friends by card, otherwise they will not feel at liberty to enter your new home. The fashionable call of a few minutes is unknown. A lady who arrives at four o'clock will remain until six or seven. The calls of intimate friends are half-day visits. Gentlemen raise their hats to each other, or at least salute in passing, and shake hands both at meeting and parting, though the interview may have lasted only two minutes.

I have been in contact with the police department a good deal, owing to our men getting into trouble, or to other people causing us trouble in our work. Paving was such a new thing that the people would congregate in crowds to see the work progress and how Gringoes did things. Thus they would not only block up the side-walks but crowd into the street so that we could hardly work. The first year, when I was rolling, I had to ask for police protection to keep the people out of my way so that I should not run over any one. (Our rollerman in Mexico City did run over and kill a man who slipped and fell in front of the roller when trying to get out of the way.) But as the police were as much interested as any one else, and spent most of the time gaping themselves, they were not of much use. There are said to be over 900 police (including detectives and mounted men) in this city, and they are certainly to be found at every street corner except in the "Colonias," or foreign colonies. But they are a bedraggled lot, undersized, with ill-fitting uniforms, armed with clubs, and pistols of every size and calibre. The mounted men who, as a rule, are a better built lot, have no club, but carry a sabre and a rifle (of very antiquated pattern) as well as a pistol. Nobody pays much attention to the foot police, but the mounted men make themselves respected, as the following instance will show. On the 16th of September 1905 (the great national holiday) some of the mounted men were clearing the streets by the simple expedient of backing their horses into the crowds. The horse of one of these was crowding a big burly peon (farm labourer) and occasionally stepping on his feet, till in desperation the man put his hands under the horse's flank and gave such a push that he nearly sent horse and rider over. Immediately he did so he ran, and directly the policeman recovered himself he pulled out his sabre and went after him. As far as I could see them the policeman was belabouring the poor fellow over the head and shoulders with his heavy sword, until the man found an opening where he could duck into the crowd and was safe.

Of the foot police in Mexico city, some time ago, it took nine to arrest a drunken Irishman, and then they had to carry him bodily to jail. Last year, here, I saw an American hobo who had just licked four of them, and was feeling so proud that it finally took a whole squad to land him in the commissaria. He reminded me of a farmer in Guelph, whose boast it was that, whenever he got drunk, it took the whole police force of the city to lock him up. There were only the chief and four constables in Guelph at the time, and they certainly hated to see him get drunk.

The police here, however, are at a great disadvantage. For if they should club a man who has any friends or influence they are sure to lose their jobs, and are lucky if they don't get locked up as well. And if they should shoot under almost any circumstances, they are certain to land in the penitentiary. I saw a prisoner once being escorted by three guards armed with rifles and bayonets from the penitentiary to one of the barracks (to become a soldier) when he suddenly made a dash, got free, and ran up the street like a shot. The guards were hampered by their weapons and could not catch him, yet not one of them offered to shoot. The man finally ran into the arms of a policeman at a corner, who happened to be awake. In the States, on the other hand, the police are too free with their guns altogether, and will club a man on the slightest pretext.

The custom in this country is to put habitual drunkards, criminals, or loafers into the army for a term of years. So that nearly all the infantry regiments are composed of at least one-third of this class, the balance being volunteers. Within the last few months the Congress passed a new law regarding the army, to the effect that the soldiers should be drawn by lot, one man out of every hundred of the inhabitants. This law went into effect, and the first drawing was to be made on the fifteenth day of January 1912. From this date no more criminals are to be drafted into the ranks. There is considerable opposition to this law in some parts of the country, and I have not heard how the drawings came off.

The volunteers I mentioned above are intended to see that the criminal element do not run away. The barracks are always surrounded by a high wall like a prison, and have iron gates at which an officer and the guard always stand. No one goes in or out without a permit. When the wives of married soldiers bring their food (the Mexican soldier feeds himself) all the baskets are searched by the officer for prohibited articles. I have seen them at drill with a line of armed guards thrown out around the drill grounds to watch over the rest. It can be imagined what a round-shouldered, unkempt looking lot the majority of the troops are. The cavalry are a good deal better as a whole, as they are mostly volunteers. About five years ago, when there was some talk of war between Mexico and Guatemala, the police rounded up all the saloons and captured every one inside them to fill up the "Volunteer" regiments that this state was raising as its quota. They got some of my men, and I had to go up and identify them so as to get them out.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Federal Rurales—Robbery by servants—Wholesale thieving—Lack of police discipline—A story of Roosevelt.

WHAT I have said about the Mexican troops does not apply to the regiments of Federal Rurales (Irregular Horse), who are an entirely different class of men. Originally they were recruited from captured bandits, for the purpose of hunting down others. Now they are mostly recruited from the cowboy or *vaquero* class. They have good uniforms, fine horses and arms, are splendid riders, and have almost unlimited authority in the capture and even execution of bandits or road-agents. They are the men who are used in most of the Indian fighting and in local uprisings such as happened some years ago on the Texas border.

A few years ago a bullion train, between here and Tepic, was attacked by bandits and all but one of the guards were killed. He managed to stampede the mules, and get away with the bullion to safety. The Rurales were ordered out, overtook the bandits and arrested them; nearly thirty were shot without trial, on the spot where the attack had been made. Mexican justice, in cases of this kind, or in labour strikes, is very prompt, though to an outsider it may seem rather cruel. In the great strike in the cotton mills in Orizaba a few years ago, the strikers, after some rioting, burned down one of the mills. The Rurales captured the president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer of the local union who had instigated the trouble, and shot them on the site of the burned mill. This seems pretty rough on the leaders, but strike disorders will not be tolerated in this country. If by shooting four of the ringleaders the disorders can be stopped at once it is cheap at the price, considering the loss of life that would ultimately ensue if the disorders were allowed to continue. Look at the number of men killed and crippled for life in the teamsters' strike in Chicago, or in the street-car men's strike in San Francisco, and that was in a Saxon country. In a Latin country it would start in a strike and end in revolution.

The first year we were here the servants robbed us of nearly everything we possessed, and managed to get away without being caught. On one occasion, however, my wife caught one of the girls trying to sneak out with some of the children's clothes. She stopped her in time, and, locking the front door, she told the girl she would have to wait till I came home at noon, it then being about 11.30 A.M. A few minutes later I happened to return, and my wife told me of the circumstances. I went to get the girl before I called a policeman, but she was not in the house. All the houses in Guadalajara, and in fact in the greater part of Mexico except in some of the foreign colonies, are built in continuous blocks. The front windows on the streets have iron bars covering them, and they all have double front doors; the outer one of wood and the inner one of steel bars, with a short hallway between them. The garden is in the centre of the house and is called the patio, so there is no outlet except through the front door. The girl, however, had taken a small ladder we had in the house, and with its assistance had got up on the roof of a small wash-house. From here it was nearly seven feet to the roof of the house, a straight wall without footholds, yet she had managed to make this climb taking her bundle of clothes with her, and had gone from roof to roof (they are all flat) till she found a way to get down to the street and to safety.

The police never make any very strenuous attempts to catch a criminal if the offence is committed against a foreigner, for they are regarded as lawful prey. Another girl stole my wife's watch and chain, and though I laid complaint within an hour of the occurrence, the police declared that they could not find her, and she must have left the city. We had at our yard an old man as night-watchman who had spent most of his life in the secret service here. I went to see him, and told him that I would give him $5 if he could catch the girl, and within three hours he had her in jail. We never recovered the watch, but the girl got a sentence of four years. One woman robbed us in rather a funny way. We had taken her in without a recommendation, and my wife was watching her closely the first day she was in the house. About ten o'clock she came to my wife and asked if she could take out the " basura " (rubbish for the garbage wagon); she came from the back of the house with the basket on her head, walked right past my wife, who opened the door for her and then went into the parlour. As the girl was a long time in returning my wife went out to the *zaguan* (the hall between the inner and outer doors), and there lay an empty basket but no girl. She then went to the back of the house, and there on the kitchen floor lay the *basura;* and the wash-line was empty of all the clothes that had been out there drying.

A friend of mine had his house completely stripped of everything of value (by his servants) while the family were out; the thieves were never caught, though one of the girls had two gold front teeth (a most uncommon thing amongst Mexicans). Most people when they leave their houses, and no member of the family stays at home, either turn out all the servants and lock the doors, or lock the servants in the house while they are away. An American ore-buying concern here had its office in front of the railway station, the busiest part of the city. One Sunday afternoon four men drove up in a wagon, opened the door with a key, loaded the cash-safe on to the wagon, locked the door, and neither they nor the safe have ever been seen since. The police saw them at work, but thought they were employees of the house and so did not interfere. I went into a billiard hall a few days ago in Acambaro (while waiting between trains) to play a game; the proprietor said he was sorry but some one had stolen all the balls. A few weeks ago I was in a street car in Morelia; when we got to a cross-over the conductor cussed, for some one had stolen the switch (tie rods and all) during the night.

In Guanaguato, a mining town near here, there used to live a mine manager who was in the habit of keeping rather large sums of money in his house. His servant girl told some of her friends of this, and also that he would be out at the mine on a certain night. She was, however, mistaken about the latter, as he happened to stay at home. During the night Mrs. Rose woke up and found four men in her room. When she called to her husband one of them struck her across the back with a machete (cane knife), then her husband woke up and grappled with them though quite unarmed. While the poor fellow was putting up a most unequal fight his wife, though badly hurt, ran to the bureau, got out his revolver and handed it to him. But he was so terribly wounded that though he was able to empty the gun and scare off the robbers he could not shoot well enough to get any of them. His wife recovered, but poor Rose died the next day from his wounds. I am glad to say that the murderers were all caught later and shot. But there is a moral to this which many of us have learned: if you have a revolver keep it under your pillow and not in a bureau drawer.

A few years ago a poor old American market-gardener here was killed a most brutal way, being first tortured to try to make him show where he had hidden money that did not exist; he was well over seventy years old, rather childish, but liked and admired by the entire American colony here. Some of this bandit element then decided to hold up the owner of one of the largest hardware (ironmonger's) stores here; but his wife and fourteen-year-old boy happened to overhear some of the conversation from the porch of their house (not one hundred yards from where the old man had been killed), and one with a shotgun and the other with a 22 calibre rifle went out and so peppered them that they fled with what lead they had received. It was lucky for them that they did so, for, on another occasion, a man did actually hold up this same gentleman, and when Kipper finally got through with him, he was glad to get into the hands of a policeman alive. I have said enough to show that the people are thieves, and at times dangerous. As I said before, there are plenty of policemen, but they are on actual duty twelve hours per day, and then have to sleep in the police station, ready to be called out in case they are needed; therefore they put in most of their duty-time getting cat-naps in doorways or wherever they can find a place. Besides this, they are recruited from the peon class, and get very little pay. During my first year's work, when I used to go to the yard at 3 A.M., I have seen a dozen of them asleep on the benches in San Francisco park as I passed through. Discipline is almost unknown, and I have seen policemen on duty sitting on the curb shining their shoes. Of course they smoke all the time on duty, and very frequently drink more than is good for them.

What they need is a Roosevelt for police commissioner. They tell a story of Roosevelt when he was police commissioner in New York. One evening he saw a policeman standing before a saloon back entrance about to take a drink of beer. "What is your name?" asked Roosevelt. "It is none of your business; what is your name?" said the cop. "My name is Roosevelt," was the answer. The policeman finished his beer, wiped his mouth on his sleeve, and said, "If your name is really Roosevelt then I guess my name is Dennis" (a slang phrase in America, used in the sense that he was discharged). The quick reply saved him from more than a reprimand. This reminds me of a story of the judge in Kentucky who had a man up for making illicit whisky. "What is your name?" he asked the prisoner, and was answered, "Joshua." The judge smiled on the court, and said, "Joshua, Joshua, it seems to me that I have heard that name before. Oh yes! you are the fellow who made the sun stand still." "No," replied the prisoner, "I am that Joshua who made the moonshine still" (the name given to an illicit distillery).

CHAPTER XXIX

Tequila—Mexican respect for the white man—Personal vengeance preferred to Law—Mexican stoicism—Victims of red tape.

TEQUILA, which is the common drink in Guadalajara, is fermented and distilled pulque. Pulque is the fresh sap of the maguey or "century" plant (one of the big-leafed cacti), tasting something like sweet cider. Like "tari" in India, it is practically non-intoxicating when fresh, but when fermented is very much so, and when distilled into tequila it is something like Indian "arrak," and has the effect of driving most men fighting-crazy. An ordinary tumblerful sells for six cents, so the very poorest can afford it, and practically every one, men and women, drink it. The police are very indulgent with drunks, and generally leave them alone if they can zig-zag within the confines of the street. Even when they do have to arrest them they handle them tenderly. For instance, one night I saw a drunk, on his way to the lock-up, sit down in the middle of the street and swear by all the calendar that he would go no farther until he had another drink. After remonstrating and arguing in vain one of the police went and got him a drink, when he arose and went peaceably along.

Only on two occasions have I seen the police club a man, which in the States is no uncommon sight. Once was when two police were taking off a man by his arms pulled over their necks; he took a bite out of one of the necks, and they had to club him off. The other case shows the respect of the average Mexican for a white man. On one occasion two men started to fight near where I was working. One of them had a knife and the other a blocksetter's spike. I noticed that one of them was wounded and, being the smaller, would probably be killed by the other. They were not my men, but I hated to see an unevenly matched fight, so I ran up, and on my demand (I am afraid I spoke rather roughly) they both gave up their weapons. One had a stab in the stomach, and I told him I would send him to the hospital, at which he broke and ran. I followed, but to all my arguments he would reply that he had a family to support and would be sent directly from the hospital to the jail for fighting, so preferred to cure himself. Finally I let him go, and when I got back to the work I found a policeman whom one of my men had run to fetch when I started to take a hand. To him I turned over the weapons of war, and, on his insisting, I also gave him a description of the men, telling him about the wounded man. As he was returning to the police station to make his report he ran into my wounded friend who was on his way home, and with the assistance of another officer tried to take him to the hospital. Then this man, who had given up his weapon to me without a fight, now, though unarmed, put up such a fight that they had to club him into submission before they could take him. On another occasion a man who formerly had worked for us got into a fight on the Paseo, and with two policemen after him, shooting at him, he ran into our gate, and getting behind some barrels of asphalt defied the police. They did not seem anxious at all to come to close quarters with him, and so things rather hung fire. Our yard foreman, who was an old miner and prospector in the early days of Colorado, told the police to hurry up as his men were doing no work owing to the excitement. Then, seeing that the police were stuck, he walked up to the man, took him by the wrist, and jerked him out from his barricade and turned him over to the police out in the street.

The police in Mexico carry open lanterns at night, I suppose it is to warn evildoers to get out of their way! I saw three of them once hunting for a man among the vacant lots of the Colonia Francesa, and they looked like three fireflies whom any one could easily elude in the darkness. Once one of my men disappeared for a few days, and when he returned to work I asked him what he had been up to. He told me that he had got into a fight, and a policeman in trying to arrest him had hit him over the head with his lantern and broken it, and that he had to lie in jail till he could pay his fine, besides paying for a new lantern.

The Mexicans hate the law to step in to settle their differences, as they believe only in personal vengeance. I was in the commissaria once when a man was brought in badly hurt, and, as he refused to tell the judge who had done it, he was sent to jail till he should tell. On a recurring sentence or, as the judge said, "trenta days y vuelta" (thirty days and return); this is a very common way of prolonging a sentence when the law distinctly lays down the limit of sentence for the offence. I said to the judge, who is a good friend of mine, that this seemed queer justice. "Well," said he, "it is the only means I have to deal with these people, and to avert murder. If I can only find out who the other man is I can put him out of harm's way till this fellow cools down and forgets his wrongs." I heard of another case of a man brought in as a drunk, who was set in one corner to wait his turn at examination.

When his turn finally came, they tried to prod him up when he did not answer, thinking he was shamming, but they found he was dead from a bad stab in the chest. He had kept himself so covered with his blanket that they had not known he was wounded, trusting, I suppose, that it would not be discovered, and that later he could settle with his opponent in his own way.

Mexicans are of a stoical Indian blood, and pain that they understand they can bear without a murmur. But a headache or other pain that they cannot account for makes them think they are going to die. One of our men slipped into a melting-tank containing liquid asphalt at between 300° and 400° Fahrenheit. He fell in up to his armpits, yet never made a sound either then or when he was pulled out, but actually assisted us in getting his clothes off. We rolled him in oiled cloths, got him into a hack, gave him half a bottle of tequila, and prepared to start him off to the hospital when a priest came up, running, confessed him, and gave him the last rites of the church. Through it all he never made a moan, though his teeth were chattering with the shock. The law in this country said that in case of an accident one must not touch the person until the police have had a chance to investigate, and had this happened with only Mexicans around, they would have telephoned the police, and then sat idle till they came, with the man still in the kettle: this law has since been changed. I, however, took chances, and ordered a hack, then I telephoned to the *Jefe Politico* (mayor and chief magistrate) asking permission to send the man direct to the hospital without waiting for the police investigation. He consented on my assuring him that it was an accident. So I sent a man with the poor fellow and a note to the director of the hospital, but I found out later that when the director saw that the man was certain to die, he refused to receive him without a permit from the police captain of our precinct. So the poor devil was driven one and one-half miles back to the police station and from there back to the hospital, and it was nearly two hours from the time of the accident before he got medical attention. At the police station the man, half crazy with pain and tequila, accused the man who had pulled him out of having pushed him in, so down came the police and arrested him. The judge of the first criminal court was a good friend of the company, and we went up to see him so as to have an immediate trial if possible. He took our depositions, and as luckily half a dozen of us had seen the accident, he turned the accused man loose in a very few hours, though it caused us some trouble. I told the judge about the hospital business, and he severely reprimanded the director.

CHAPTER XXX

Accidents at the mines—Mexico City—Peculiar laws—"Evidence"—A theft of straw.

MEXICANS, like the natives of India, have a great dread of hospitals. During our first year's work one of the men got his finger caught in the roller and had the end joint cut off. As I was writing a note to the doctor the police came up and insisted on taking the man to the police station, whence he was taken to the hospital. Three months later I saw him when he had just come out, and he had lost the use of the entire hand through blood-poisoning. They tell me that the young students of the medical college do most of the operating on the poor, and, if this was a sample, I am not surprised at the prevalent dread of the hospitals.

As I said when writing about Texas, Mexicans are most careless and take desperate chances, generally through ignorance. One day two gangs of men that I had moving some heavy rock crusher parts began racing with the flywheels (weighing 1200 kilos each) which they were wheeling along on the rims. I warned them, but the words were hardly out of my mouth when one of the wheels toppled over on the foot of one of the men. He did not complain much beyond some grimaces, and when we lifted the wheel he staggered off, limping. I thought that the soft earth had saved his foot, but the doctor later pronounced some bones broken. One year we were piling up some crushed rock near where our electric power wires entered the motor-house; these wires carried 2000 volts. I had noticed the men on top of the rock pile touching these wires (the rock being absolutely dry and the insulation on the wires fairly good, they received no shock), and warned them that they would get a shock some day that would kill some one. I found that they paid no attention, so I had a board stuck up warning them of their danger, and stating that the company would not be responsible for any accidents. The next day or so the government inspector, the general manager, and myself were down at the yard on inspection. We heard a yell, and there was a man hung on the wire, kicking like a galvanised frog. Another Mexican, with more presence of mind than the average, ran up with a stick, knocked the wire loose, and the man fell down as if dead. We telephoned for a doctor, and meanwhile tried artificial respiration. The doctor soon arrived, and within an hour or so the man was all right but for a very badly burned arm and hand. There had been slight rain which had wetted both the insulation and the rock pile under their feet, thus forming a ground circuit.

Mexicans are very good to their poor, but seem to have very little sympathy for any one hurt in an accident. They are much like children in many ways and can only see the funny side of a serious matter. There was a fire in Mexico City in a lumber company's yard, and two fire companies were attacking it from the roofs of houses on different sides. In moving a hose one of the firemen accidentally directed it on the firemen across the way. They immediately retaliated, and for the next few minutes the fire was entirely forgotten by the two companies, who were busy pumping on each other amidst much laughter. Finally, one of the men, in trying to reach a vantage point, slipped and fell into the burning yard, at which a perfect howl of laughter went up from all the spectators. He was luckily rescued with only a few bruises, and a trifle singed, but the moral remains the same. In Guadalajara fire protection is a farce. The fire-engine consists of a tank on wheels with a pump attached, which is worked by hand and throws a one-inch stream. Luckily, the city is practically fire-proof, being almost entirely built out of adobe (sun-dried brick), with some few modern buildings made out of stone, brick, or steel.

The city water-supply is insufficient, though the sewerage system is good and modern. The city now has some twenty kilometres of asphalt-paved streets, with cement curbs and side-walks built by our company in the past eight years, and we shall probably do as much more. Mexico City has about 200 kilometres of asphalt pavement, about half belonging to our company, Puebla, twenty-five kilometres, Durango, thirty-two kilometres, Chihuahua, four kilometres, Tampico, nine kilometres, Morelia, eight kilometres, all of the last-named cities having been laid by our company, and the majority of it by myself, apart from the work done in Mexico City. All have good sewer systems and water-works, so Mexico is not so far behind the times in some things. Every property owner or lessee has to sweep and water twice daily the street in front of his property, except in the business districts, where the city supplies sprinkling carts and sweepers. The police see that these rules are carried out; if you are behind time in doing your part the policeman hustles you; if you are warned repeatedly, then the government sends a man and you are charged an exorbitant rate for his work. In this way the streets are kept better than those of many cities I have known in the States.

Mexican law is a thing to leave strictly alone if you can. The procedure in some respects follows that of the French courts. The stamp law no one pretends to understand. Our company was fined $600 in the Federal district for something, in regard to stamping contracts, which they had done under the advice of the most noted lawyer in the republic, the late ambassador from Mexico to the United States. Once our night-watchman captured a thief trying to steal some tools and the anvil from our smithy. He trussed him up, and then for further security tied the anvil to his feet. The police insisted on taking along the anvil as "evidence," and we, being inexperienced, allowed them to do so. It took seven days to try the case, and, until the man was convicted, the court would not give us back the "evidence." On another occasion one of our carters ran over a child with his wagon and killed it. He at once disappeared, but the police arrested the wagon, and it was nearly two weeks before we could get it back.

In a complaint of theft you have to appear with two independent witnesses who can vouch, not that you owned the article stolen, but that you are a man of means sufficient to have owned such an article; public repute is not sufficient evidence. For instance, I appeared for the company once in the case of a theft of about $50 of straw. I was told to bring the necessary witnesses. I asked the judge if this was necessary as every one knew our company, and he himself knew that we were handling contracts for hundreds of thousands of dollars. It made no difference; so I went out and got two clerks, who earned possibly £4 per month each in a neighbouring store, and took them up to vouch for the company. In all my cases I have never employed a lawyer. In the court-room there sit the judge and his secretary at ordinary desks, each witness is brought in by himself, and neither the accused nor any one else is in the room, unless you wish for an interpreter, whom you either supply yourself or the court provides. The judge offers you a chair and you sit down near him. You are not sworn, but the judge inquires if you intend to tell the truth, your age, nationality, &c., and then asks you to tell him all you know about the case, which his clerk takes down. Your statement is then read over to you, signed, and out you go.

CHAPTER XXXI

Solitary confinement—Mexican rogues—The humorous side—A member of the smart set—The milkmen.

Incomunicado (solitary confinement) is one of the bad features of Mexican law. The accused is placed thus for the first forty-eight hours (in some cases up to seventy-two hours), and during this time the investigating judge is trying his best to wring a confession out of him, or to confound him by constant interrogations. Another bad feature is the length of time the officials can hold a man without trial while they are trying to get evidence against him; but this is not done so much now as formerly. I have known men held thus for over a year in jail without trial, and then turned loose when the case could not be proved against them. Another peculiarity is the length of time a man condemned to death can delay the execution by appeals, &c. All this is now under discussion by the new government, and the consensus of opinion is that changes for the better will be made in the laws. There was a man shot here in the penitentiary a year ago who was condemned six years previously for the murder of his wife. Woman murder is about the only thing they seem to execute a man for in Mexico. For any ordinary killing in a fight, eight years is the longest sentence I have seen recorded, though some have been condemned to death and their sentence afterwards reduced to this amount. Yet I have seen sentences ranging from two years to twelve years for robbery with breach of trust.

Mexican rogues work out some clever schemes; for instance, the following was worked successfully in San Luis Potosi, and the perpetrator has not yet been caught: A man dressed as a wealthy *hacendado* (ranch-owner) walked into the largest implement house there, and, after looking over their stock, picked out and bought $15,000 worth of machinery. He said, "As you do not know me, I will pay in cash," and pulled out his pocket-book. "Oh," said he, "I forgot to cash this draft, and find I have only about $1000 in cash with me, but here is a sight draft for $30,000, made out to me by the Bank of London and Mexico; which I will endorse over to you. When you have cashed the draft, please send the balance to this address." The owner of the store was delighted to meet a customer who bought such large orders without beating down the price, and who also paid cash, and was bowing him out with much ceremony when they encountered coming in another presumably wealthy *hacendado*. "Why, old fellow, what are you doing here?" said No. 2. "Just buying a few things for the ranch," said No. 1; and then, laughing, "Do you know, I found myself without ready money to pay for them, and so had to leave my draft here for these people to collect." "If it is not more than $50,000 I will settle for you, old friend, but that is all the money I have with me," and he pulled out a pocket-book filled with bills of $500 and $1000. So they marched back, and No. 2 paid the balance of $14,000. "Now," said No. 1 to the store proprietor, "if you will kindly endorse back my draft to me, I think we have the business closed up; please ship the goods as soon as possible." The check was endorsed back, and the two old friends went out arm-in-arm. To his disgust the storekeeper found next day that No. 1 had been to the bank with the draft, which the bank had cashed on the storekeeper's endorsement.

They also show some humour in their thefts. A Mexican lawyer who lived near me in the French colony had some friends to his house one evening, who sat out with him on the porch. They went in to supper, and when they returned found all the chairs had been stolen. The lawyer decided not to call in the police but to catch the robbers himself, so after his guests were gone he brought out some more chairs and then hid in the shrubbery with a gun. There he sat till 3 A.M., when he made up his mind that they would not come again, so he went into the house to put away the gun. When he returned to bring in the chairs the rest of them were gone also. How the thieves must have enjoyed watching him as he watched for them, and then stealing his chairs from under his nose! The town has hardly got over laughing about it yet.

As we did not have very much success with the police protection afforded us by the government during our first year's work, we asked permission to have two or three police turned over to us, whom we would pay. The government refused, but said we could put on any of our own men and buy them uniforms and clubs, and that then the government would give them authority as regular police. So the second year we put two of our own men in uniform, and I picked out two of the cheekiest young cubs we had. One day a young man of the *gente fine* (smart set) started to walk across some fresh-laid pavement, which had not yet cooled and set, when the policeman interfered and requested him not to cross. The young fellow gave him a withering glance and started forward again; the policeman again interfered with the same result. When he started the third time the policeman grabbed him by the coat tails and pulled him back. This took the dude by surprise; he tripped over the curb and sat down rather forcibly on the sidewalk. I was standing about one hundred feet away, and ran forward as soon as I saw that there would be trouble. I reached them just as the dude was unmercifully hammering my policeman, who did not dare to retaliate. I grabbed him by the wrist and gave it a twist (the old schoolboy trick), and soon had him marching along. He struggled furiously, and in a few minutes we had a crowd of about one thousand people around us, and I was glad to see three city policemen coming up on the run, to whom I turned him over. He spent the rest of the day in the lock-up, and, the story going round, we had very little more trouble with this class. On one or two occasions we had trouble with the police themselves trying to cross our work. On the first occasion a mounted officer started to ride across some fresh concrete in spite of the protests of the concrete foreman, who was an American; then the latter lost his temper and jerked the officer's horse off the concrete. When I heard of the occurrence, which was only a few minutes later, I dashed off to the *Jefe Politico* to put our case before him before any exaggerated version could reach him. On the second occasion a police captain ordered me to remove some barricades I had across a street so that the carriage of some big-wig could drive across. I refused, and told the captain he could remove it himself if he were willing to take the consequences. He rode off, threatening all sorts of things, but I never saw him again.

My pet aversions are the milkmen, who have caused me more trouble than all the rest put together. The milkmen in Mexico ride on horseback and carry the milk in four large cans, hung two on each side of the saddle, one in front and one behind the leg; thus they gallop from house to house making their deliveries. They and the hack-drivers are the toughest element in the city. On one occasion I warned two of them not to cross the street on which I was working, but the minute my back was turned they galloped across, thinking that I could not catch them on foot. But I happened to have my horse at the next corner, and I mounted and galloped the block, caught up to them, and grabbed one man's horse by the bridle. After a little argument, finding I was determined to take him to the commissaria, he suddenly leaned forward, slipped the headstall over the horse's head, and dashed off, leaving the bridle in my hands. His companion, though, thought he would put up a fight, demanded the bridle, and on my refusal started for me. I generally carry on the work a Luger automatic pistol in a holster slung from the shoulder, so that the gun hangs just under the left armpit. When the man came forward I jerked my coat open instinctively, on which he turned and fled. The joke of the thing was that I had no pistol with me at the time, though I had forgotten the fact when I reached for it. On another occasion one of them galloped past my concrete foreman, who made a snatch at him, and at the same time the man put out his hand to push him away. The foreman's hand closed on his wrist, and off he came over his horse's tail, while his steed galloped on. I was standing a few feet away, and the man's face, as he felt himself going, was really too funny. Of course we had no right to take the law into our own hands in this way, but we had to do so in self-defence, or we should have got no work done at all. I told the foreman he must be more careful, which he promised to be, and a day or two later he told me a dairykeeper had ridden over the work with two of his milkmen, and when called to had cursed him for his pains. He described the man, and, as I knew him, I looked him up and told him that he must not do it again, and that I thought he owed the foreman an apology. He was the black sheep of one of the best families in town, and was consequently very uppish.

He told me he would ride where he pleased and would go the same route the following day, and, to show me that I could not stop him, if I were not there when he passed he would wait for me. So I said I would be there. Our manager, however, heard of it, and went to the *Jefe Politico*, who insisted on sending up a large squad of police to arrest the man should he attempt to pass. But it was trouble wasted, as the man was only bluffing and never appeared again on the work. The *Jefe* told me that I had the right to arrest and hold offenders till a policeman arrived. At first I carried no gun, but when our yard foreman narrowly escaped being stabbed by one of his men, and I myself got into one or two rows of this sort, I decided to carry my Luger like the rest. Any one can get a permit to carry a pistol here who will pay the $1.50 for the licence.

CHAPTER XXXII

Carrying firearms—The business of Mexico—Its management by foreigners—Real-estate and mining booms—Foreign capital—Imports and exports.

I SPOKE of carrying pistols; I am not in favour of it, but when working a large body of men, as we do here, and of the class of these people, I think it wise, as the very fact that you are known to have one will often keep you out of trouble. For the people are treacherous, and you can never tell at what moment some man with whom you have had trouble will decide to take his revenge, generally when he has you at a disadvantage. Here is an instance from the *Mexican Herald*: "George T. Jennings, superintendent for the Pacific Lumber Company, was shot and instantly killed by a Mexican workman at one of the company's camps in the Culiacan district of the state of Michoacan on 19th March. . . . The shooting was done by a workman just discharged. . . . A second telegram states that the murderer has been captured, seriously wounded." Probably Mr. Jennings managed to shoot as he fell.

They do not understand fair play, but think a man who does not take all the advantage he can get is a fool. Even in affairs of honour some of them will take all they can get, though the following is an exceptional case: Some time ago Burns, an American, had a quarrel with Martinez, a Mexican, son of a wealthy *hacendado* (ranchman) of Guadalajara. Burns was manager for a mining company at Ayutla, a town near here, and young Martinez had charge of his father's ranch at that place. They were in love with the same girl, quarrelled over her one evening, and decided to fight a duel. They were both armed, and agreed to walk together to a secluded place on some side-street and shoot it out. On the way Martinez, who was walking a little behind the other, drew his pistol and shot Burns twice in the back, and then fled; Burns, though badly wounded, turned and emptied his pistol at the fleeing man without effect. This was Burns' dying statement. Martinez lay out in the hills for a few days, then came in and gave himself up as soon as he heard that Burns was dead. His family moved heaven and earth, and he is now out a free man. Yet this is the second man he has killed by shooting in the back, as it became known later.

Though we overstepped our rights in defending our work, it is nothing to the way the *gente fino* treat the peon class. I was once after duck near here, on a ranch where I had a permit to shoot. At the lake there was a Mexican of the peon class shooting mudhens, and unconsciously aiding us as he kept the ducks moving. The owner of the ranch and his foreman happened to come riding by, and asked if the peon was of our party; when we said "no" the owner told the foreman to run him off. The foreman rode up to the man and ordered him off, telling him to run; then, as he was not going fast enough, he rode over the man, knocking him down. The poor fellow picked himself up and fled for his life, but in Texas that foreman would have been a poor insurance risk. Mexicans of the lower class, in spite of their poverty, are great spendthrifts. We have a man who has been with us four years. He started at 45 cents per day, and has worked up to $2.75 per day, which he has been getting now for over two years. I asked him one day if he had any money saved up. He replied, "I have $10." I asked him why he did not lay by $1 per day, which he could easily do, having no one but himself and one sister to support, and that he would have nearly $400 at interest by the end of the year. He replied, "If I had $400 all at one time I would go crazy."

Mexicans control very little of the business of their own country except that of agriculture. The mining is nearly all in the hands of English and American companies, with a few mines in the hands of other foreigners, notably the French. The street railways and electric power and light companies are also in the hands of Canadians, Englishmen, and Americans, except one belonging to a Chinese company. What is called in the States the drygoods (clothing, &c.) business is almost entirely in the hands of Frenchmen, as also are nearly all the cotton mills. The hardware business, including that of agricultural implements, the foundries and the machine shops are nearly all in the hands of Germans, with a sprinkling of Americans and Spaniards. The Spaniards run most of the small stores, and you generally find Spaniards as managers of the big ranches, so that the Mexican cuts a very small figure in the industry of his own country. They own, of course, most of the land, fill all the government offices, and for the rest are the clerks and labourers of the country; and this is what makes them dislike the foreigner who comes into their country to take all the good things which they consider as their own, though they will not make use of them themselves, and will not invest their money in new undertakings; but when a business is sure, then they want it all for themselves, and howl that the foreigner is stealing their country.

All real-estate and mining booms are handled by Americans, who are, I suppose, the greatest boomers on earth. But when the bottom drops out of the boom, as often happens, you rarely see the wily American holding the sack, for he generally manages to unload on the natives whom he has succeeded in getting all stirred up. The latter hold on too long and get caught—like the southerner whose slave before the war had tried to buy his freedom with some money he had saved up, but as he was a good man his master was loth to part with him. Then the war broke out, and as it approached its end the master changed his mind. He sent for the slave and said, "Sam, you remember you asked to buy your freedom some time ago. I have been thinking the matter over, and I have come to the conclusion that I did not act right by you. You have been such a good and faithful servant that I have decided to accede to your request." The nigger scratched his head, rubbed one leg with the other, and finally said, "Massa, I did want to buy myself, but Ah been studying erbout it lately too, an Ah come to de clusion dat niggah prop'ty am not good investment just at present."

The way real estate has jumped in this city during the last eight years is simply astounding. Land that could be bought once for 17 cents a square metre sold within four years for $8 per metre, though I must say that the promoters had spent $1 per metre on improvements before they sold. Since the revolution prices have fallen badly, but will pick up again as soon as confidence is restored.

The day for selling and booming unimproved suburban property seems to have passed here as well as in Los Angeles. Nowadays, if one wants to start a new subdivision, or *colonia*, as it is called here, one has to lay out the streets and pave them with asphalt, or something nearly as good, put in cement side-walks, instal a complete water and sewer system, and when that is done you are ready to sell lots; but with a well-picked site and plenty of capital it is a most profitable undertaking even to-day in Mexico. I have seen in Los Angeles men laying out cement side-walks and paving the streets in the middle of an orange orchard, the lots of which would be sold later, snapped up, and the entire place built upon within the course of a few months. I have seen the same thing here, all but the building, in the *Colonia Moderna*, the land I spoke of above. The lots were nearly all sold within a year, but the building has been slow, as most of the land was bought for still further speculation at even higher prices. I mentioned above that foreigners own the greater part of the industries of the country, and the following few figures will give a clearer idea of what I mean. The Mexican Government having no Statistical Department, it is hard to get really accurate figures as to foreign investments in the country. The following figures, however, are most reliable, being compiled partly by the Canadian Bank of Commerce (for the benefit of its directors and stockholders), and published in its annual report, and partly from other trustworthy sources. The foreign capital (which is over seventy per cent. of the entire capital of the country) invested in this republic is drawn from the following sources.

British, including Canadian, $350,000,000, about 60 per cent. being invested in railways, 15 per cent. in mining, and 25 per cent. in agricultural and other enterprises.

The United States about $500,000,000, about 35 per cent. invested in railways, 45 per cent. in mining, and the balance in other industries.

German, French, Austrian, Spanish, Italian, Belgian, and Dutch (in the order named) about $150,000,000, invested largely in bank stocks, in manufactures, and in wholesale and retail trade. The United States, of course, leads, being such a close neighbour, but England, with the help of Canada, has nothing to be ashamed of. Still there is a large and profitable market for England to investigate more fully, as her exports to this country are not in the same proportion. The last figures available of the imports and exports of this country are, the former, $97,428,500, and the latter, $130,028,000. Mexico produces many minerals, and the report last year of this production shows: gold, $22,507,477; silver, $38,555,000; copper, $10,191,500; other minerals, $9,946,000.

Guadalajara is bound eventually to become a great manufacturing city, owing to the cheap electrical power which can be generated from the river close by. Up till last year 9500 horse-power was brought into the city, and the company charged from two cents to seven cents per kilowatt, according to the amount used, but it has been estimated that the river can supply power up to 200,000 horse-power, and a plant has just been completed which adds 50,000 horse-power to the 9500 horse-power we had before. Another industry which should bring great wealth to the country is the raising of eucalyptus trees for use in making railroad ties, mine timbers, and for furniture. In California the Santa Fe Railroad has planted 40,000 acres with these trees, and now the Mexican Central Railway and the Amparo Mining Company have followed suit, and the business is also being taken up by private parties. It is claimed that in three years a tree grown here is fit for telegraph poles, and in five years is big enough for railroad ties. As there is no timber in this section suitable for ties, this alone will give a good market. The Southern Pacific Railway, which is building a road from Mazatlan to Guadalajara, had to import the ties it needed from California and from Japan. It is stated that eucalyptus makes a growth of three inches in diameter and fifteen feet in height each year for the first five years or so,

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and needs very little care after the first year; an acre yields $4500 in seven years, or nearly $643 per acre per year, and the trees can be raised on soil that is not suitable for any other crop. Even supposing this estimate as much as threefold sanguine, still eucalyptus is even better than strawberries (which are grown all the year round, and sold here), though a man here who has a thirty-acre tract, part in berries and part in alfalfa, clears $5000 net per year off it. A man with brains, a fair amount of capital, and energy should do well here, and the climate is the finest that I have encountered in twenty years' wanderings in Canada and the States, even superior to that of California either in winter or summer. During the rainy season, which is from about the middle of June till the end of September, the rainfall is about thirty-five inches, but, curiously enough, during this entire season there will not be more than half-a-dozen days in which it will rain during the daylight hours. The days are sunshiny, bright, and delightfully cool; then about four or five P.M. it will begin to cloud over, and the rain will commence about seven to nine P.M., and continue a steady downpour till sunrise, when it will clear up as if by magic.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Climate of Guadalajara—American tramps—Courtship under difficulties—Influence of the priesthood—The *Metayer* system.

DURING June and July the average mean temperature in Guadalajara is 68.85° F. in the sun; the average maximum for these months is 88.52°, the average minimum is 56.48°, and the highest recorded temperature was 95° on 1st July 1908. All these records are officially taken on the top of the Degollado Theatre. In August the mean for the month is 69.26°. During November it ranges from 63.5° to 72.8°. During December and January the average mean is 57.5°. It sometimes freezes in the winter, but never enough to hurt flowers or fruit if protected from the wind. Violets grow out-of-doors all through the winter. Except during the rainy season it seldoms rains, though we do have occasional showers in the spring. The country is truly a paradise, and if only the big holdings were broken up among small farmers, all Mexico could be supplied with food grains, instead of having, as now, to import them. The reason for this is that the *hacendados*, like squatters in Australia, hold tracts of from one thousand to one or more million acres, and of this they only cultivate probably one per cent. The Government of Madero is at present trying to borrow $100,000,000 for the purpose of buying out these large holdings and selling them on long-term annual payments to the actual cultivators. If the plan succeeds, the country is bound to go ahead at a wonderful rate. As in India, the chief industry is agriculture, but Guadalajara, Aguas Calientes, and Celaya are noted for drawn-work lace and embroidery; the work is certainly beautiful. The Mexicans also are no mean decorative painters, sculptors, and builders. In buildings they put in "flat arches," which never sag or crack when the supports are removed, and they can hang masonry stairways up in the air, apparently without supports, if they can build them in a long curve. I have asked American builders how it is done, and have not received any clear answer yet.

There are at present but two ways of getting to Guadalajara by rail—either by branching off at Irapuata from the main line of the Mexican Central, which runs from El Paso, Texas, to Mexico City, or coming by steamer to Manzanillo, and from there by rail, passing *en route* the volcano of Colima, which is in eruption. This latter route, from the Pacific coast, is by far the best and pleasantest, as you thereby miss the northern desert of Mexico, and see, besides, some beautiful wild scenery. There is also a third road, which the Southern Pacific are building into Guadalajara from Mazatlan, but this will not be completed for a year or two.

Every winter Mexico is filled with American tramps who come to escape the cold up north, and they are a perfect pest at times. The Mexican police will never touch them unless some American or Englishman makes a complaint, in which case they run them out of town. Seven years ago we had such a bad lot here that the colony made complaint, and the police cleaned them up. Two of the most impudent, who returned, I had the pleasure later of seeing do some honest work on the city streets. In Mexico City the Saxon colony has a committee whose business it is to investigate the case of every tramp who arrives; if he is a good man in hard luck he is helped; if, on the other hand, he is a professional tramp, the police are at once notified, and he has to move out.

One of the things that strike a visitor to this country is the method of courtship. A Mexican girl of good family is never seen on the street with a man till she is married to him. When a young man wishes to court a girl, he walks up and down daily before the windows of her house. If she reciprocates, she comes to the window after a decent interval, the length of which is according to how highly she values herself, and smiles on him. As he gets bolder he comes nearer and nearer, till finally they get on speaking terms. All this may have taken some weeks. When matters have progressed far enough for the couple to arrive at an understanding, he makes a call on the family, and if they approve of him he is invited to call again. After this he calls as frequently as he can; the girl is present at these state calls, but it is not considered etiquette for him to speak to her directly till they are officially engaged. He must converse with the other members of the family so that they can size him up. Imagine what intellectual conversation a man would "get off" under the inspection of the whole family, and what endurance the family must have to stand it night after night. As soon as he has stayed the length of time that etiquette demands (or as long as the family can stand him), he retires to the street, she comes to her window, and they talk nonsense through the bars for the rest of the evening. It is amusing to take a walk through the residential district from eight till ten P.M. and see the hundreds of young fellows hanging on the bars courting their lady-loves.

But it is still more amusing when the lady happens to live on the second storey and he has to shout all his pretty speeches up to her! In most Mexican houses the first floor is one abode and the second floor a separate one, with different entrances and owned by different people. I often wondered what they would do when they built five and six storey flats, till I went to Puebla and saw small telephones in use, which the lady let down to her Romeo. In the case of the idle rich this form of courting goes on all through the day, the young fellow only going home for his meals.

In the evenings the band plays in the Plaza de Armes, the central garden in front of the governor's palace, and all the young folk turn out. The girls all walk in pairs in a long line one way, and the young men in pairs also walk in an outer ring the other way, so that at every round they can see and make eyes at the particular fair one. Only in Chihuahua is this rule relaxed, and the young men and women are allowed to walk together. But then Chihuahua is near the American border, and most of the boys and girls are placed in American schools, so that it is almost an American city with American customs. The architecture of the new part of the city is American, and the houses of the rich are built on large plots surrounded by gardens and trees. As the Mexican law does not recognise a religious marriage, it is always necessary to have two ceremonies—one before the judge and one before the priest, but the only binding one is that performed by the judge. Another custom which I think is peculiar to this country, at least I have never seen it in Catholic Canada, is that of kissing the priests' hands on the street. This is not only done by the poor but by almost all classes.

The church, though not recognised by law in this country, has yet an enormous power, especially amongst the poorer classes. Our labourers are always willing to work on a national holiday in case of necessity, but they cannot be persuaded to do so on any saint's day, and the number of these days is considerable. One reason for this hold that the clergy have on the Indian is the way that they have grafted the Catholic faith on the superstitions and beliefs of the Indians, instead of combating them. For instance, you can always tell the advent of a feast day, because the evening preceding it bombs are fired from all the church towers. Ask any Indian what it is done for, and he will tell you it is to drive away the devil. On All Souls' Day images of Judas Iscariot, filled with powder, are sold by thousands, and at midday are all blown up. Few Indians can tell you who Judas was, and they believe it is the devil who is being so treated. Whatever the cause, the government has failed in its object of breaking the hold of the priesthood over the country.

I wrote before of a thirty-acre farmer who makes $5000 net per annum in strawberries and alfalfa. Another with only three acres of strawberries, near Guadalajara, cleared in 1901 $1500 as his half share of the sale of the produce (on the *metayer* system) from April to August. There are seven wells on the farm, with an average lift of fifteen feet, and ten cultivators, on half shares, plant, water, tend, and sell the crop.

Agricultural labour is cheap—thirty cents per day—but land is dear, as the great landholders stick to it, and it is only gradually coming into the market. To get it, one has to know the owners and be familiar with the language, the country, and local circumstances. The system of cultivation is everywhere *metayer*; the great landholders furnish the stock, implements, and seed to their Indian peons (the "ryot" of British India), and make advances for their maintenance. The peon takes half of the crop that he raises, less the amount he has borrowed for maintenance while raising it, and is cheated at every turn and transaction. Of course on such terms much of these great estates remains uncultivated, and no doubt the owners will gradually be persuaded to sell land.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Curious customs—The abuse of concessions—Flagrant examples—Prospects for foreigners in Mexico—President Diaz—Mr. Denny's Life-story.

One of the curious customs in Mexico is the blessing of animals on the 17th of January, the feast of Saint Anthony. On this day at the Merced (Mercy) Church of this city, from four o'clock in the afternoon till dark, the people bring all their animals to be sprinkled with holy water and blessed by the priest. All the animals are highly decorated (I have seen dogs painted all the colours of the rainbow and covered with ribbons for this occasion), and every kind, horses, chickens, goats, pigs, cats, cows, all are brought to the street in front of the church, when the priest comes out and walks down the line, sprinkling them. In some matters Mexico keeps abreast of the times, and possibly is ahead of India and even England. For instance, a dirigible balloon was brought here from the States and run by an American, who could handle it perfectly, going wherever he wished and sailing or swooping at will. It was brought by a

Mexican tobacco firm to advertise their cigarettes! I doubt if India or England has yet begun to advertise with dirigibles. It was also, incidentally, a godsend to the *rateros*, pickpockets and thieves, who reaped a harvest while every one was gaping at the heavens.

One of the things which militate against the growth and prosperity of the country is the custom of granting concessions for every imaginable purpose. When these concessions are asked for by people who intend to invest money in the country and develop a new industry it is bad enough, but the trouble is that many of these concessions are obtained by concession hunters who have barely enough money to put up as the necessary guarantee. These people, hearing of the possibility of some company starting a new industry here, immediately ask for a concession covering the industry, put up the few hundreds or thousands necessary to secure the concession, and then sell out at an enormous profit to the prospective manufacturer. These holdup methods do not always succeed, however, as in the following case. The men at the head of our concern contemplated putting up gas plants in most of the big cities of the republic to supply light and power and heat, and to consume part of the immense production of oil from their field—gas here and in

California being now made from oil instead of coal. A lawyer here, hearing of this, asked for the gas concession for this city, put up the $1500 asked as a guarantee, and was granted the concession. With this in his pocket he went to Los Angeles and tried to sell it to our company, who, however, only laughed at him, told him to go ahead and put up his plant, and that they would sell him oil when he was ready. In the meantime they had secured the concession for Mexico City. After this rebuff he tried to get other people to take up the concession, and only after much expense and two years' time succeeded in getting people who would buy his concession and build the plant which is now in operation in Guadalajara. Some of these concessions are a robbery of the community at large. One granted to a dynamite concern gives them the sole right to manufacture this article, so vital to the mining industry of the country. To protect them, a duty of $90 per ton was placed on the import of the foreign dynamite, but the concession states that, if the company cannot manufacture sufficient to meet the demand, they may import free of duty the balance necessary. The outcome of this is that the company manufactures enough to protect their concession and import all they need, and the entire industry is in their hands. Another concession granted to a young Mexican of this city was ostensibly for irrigation of waste lands, and it reads in part as follows: He is allowed to take all the water he needs from Lake Chapala to irrigate these federal lands (some 400,000 acres), and is paid by the government $5 for each acre so irrigated. He is allowed to build hydro-electric works on the canal, and transmit and sell power wherever he likes; it is estimated that he can generate 50,000 horse-power on the works he has installed, and was first a competitor, and later, combined with the light and power company of the city. Then comes this small, innocent-looking clause: the land round the borders of Lake Chapala, between the present high-water mark and whatever point he succeeds in lowering the lake to, is given to him.

Just imagine a strip from 10 to 50, possibly 100, feet wide round the border of a lake that has about 130 miles, more or less, of border! Besides, he cut every landholder off from a water-front. One wealthy *hacendado*, realising what it meant to his ranch, paid him $500,000 not to touch his borders. A German company offered him $2,500,000 in cash for the bare concession.

Foreigners, as a rule, are fairly welcome in this country, as they bring in money and start new industries. The upper class and the labourers appreciate this, but the middle class and the skilled mechanics do not, as the latter are crowded out. The Mexican railroad men some time ago agitated for a law which would practically prohibit Americans working at this business, as at that time there were very few Mexicans holding responsible positions on the railroads of the country —few indeed got to be engineers or conductors. When they could not get their law passed they started anti-foreign agitations all over the country, and were backed by all who were "agin the government," till finally, five years ago last September, the word went round that all foreigners would either be killed or run out of the country. Notices were posted in this and other towns (and immediately torn down by the police) warning us what was to happen if we did not leave, and things began to look serious. Of course few of us looked for any general rising, but for isolated attacks on individuals. Lots of people found it necessary to leave for the States on business (?), and I think most that remained went armed. However, the government was not idle. On the 14th September they ordered all the saloons to be closed and stay closed till the 17th. On the 15th they started making arrests of persons known to be disaffected, and some five hundred from this city and about seven hundred from surrounding towns found themselves in the penitentiary that night. On the nights of the 15th and 16th (the great national holiday) soldiers in small squads patrolled the city till morning, and any one who even shouted "*Abajo los Gringoes*" (down with the foreigners) was immediately carried off to the Quartel. It was the quietest 16th of September we have had since I have been in the country; on the 17th the prisoners were all released, and the crisis was over, without a single case of assault in the entire republic. This is the way Diaz handled revolutionary talk. Now, since Madero's successful revolution, all this is changed, and the country is trying to become a real democracy, and may succeed unless some other Diaz arises. The railroads have been taken over by the government, they buying a controlling interest, and Americans are gradually being eliminated and Mexicans pushed to the front as fast as they can find suitable men for the higher positions.

I have not till now described the vice-president and real head of our company, Mr. E. L. Denny, and yet he is worth mentioning as well as some of the incidents of his life. A handsome man, well read, with a low, soft voice, and as well dressed a man as I have ever met; all of which sounds incongruous with his early life. He was, till a few years ago, a "prospector," who did not have much luck in his prospecting. His partners at different times were Harry Carter, who at the time was our yard foreman, Tom Grand, who is here on a prospecting trip for Denny, and Charles Canrod, who is his partner now in all his big undertakings. Twenty years ago Mr. Denny joined forces with Charlie Canrod, who had also been a prospector, and who had once made a strike and invested his money in a livery stable and hotel, which cost him $35,000, and which he later lost; for these men are rich one day and poor the next. Eighteen years ago they were both broke and came to Los Angeles to find work in order to earn enough money to go back prospecting. This a miner calls earning "a grub-stake." Denny had been working for the city, but took contracts to paint some houses, and while working on the outskirts of the town, near what is now "Westlake Park," found some oil exudes. He asked some one what it was (for he had taken a sample as a prospector does), and was told it was "Brea." He remembered that when he was in Mexico that was the Spanish name for asphalt, and also having heard that where there was an asphalt deposit there was or had been oil. He got his partner Canrod, and they clubbed together what money they had and what they could beg or borrow, and took options on all the land in the Westlake district that they could get their hands on. The two began to sink a shaft, 6 feet by 4 feet, down to find the oil. This shows how much either of them knew at that time about oil; for if they had found a gusher they would certainly have been killed. As it was, they were both overcome once or twice by gas fumes, but did not know what it was. Luckily, they only found a very little "seep" of oil, but sufficient to peddle round for painting and other purposes, and to convince the capitalists (whom they later interested) that they really had something. Thus, getting a start with the aid of borrowed capital, they interested a well-driller, who knew his business, to go in with them and sink proper wells, and they soon had a paying proposition. From Los Angeles they went to Bakersfield, where they got hold of oil properties, and when they cleaned up there they had about one million dollars each. Then they came to Mexico, bought up a tract of land, which they had personally investigated, some 500,000 acres, which showed oil indications, and invested over $1,000,000 in works, tanks, drilling rigs, &c. This field and others later purchased, of which only a small portion has so far been developed, is producing 57,000 barrels of oil per day; and this production can be doubled by opening wells already drilled and capped, as soon as the market is enlarged. Mr. Denny is now worth probably over $30,000,000, and Charlie Canrod not much, if any, less. They started the asphalt company to use up some of the by-product, and have installed a gas company in Mexico City for the same purpose, and will probably instal them in other cities as conditions warrant. They also own oil fields at Sherman and other places in California, and are interested in a dozen different ventures. Such are the men who have made the Western States what they are to-day—men not afraid to take a chance and with the brains and ability to carry their schemes through.

Errata
Donny Dohenny. RBll
Canrod Canfield

CHAPTER XXXV

Mr. Denny and a mining claim—A wholesale killing averted—Stories of shooting escapades.

Any one seeing Mr. Denny (the vice-president and biggest stockholder of our company) now would think him only a quiet man of affairs, yet some years ago he was known as one of the finest fighting men of New Mexico or Colorado. While working a prospect he had near Silver City, New Mexico, he decided to study law, did so successfully, and was called to the bar; but his ideas of practice were peculiar. He was employed by a mining company to protect a mining claim that was in litigation and which the opposing parties were about to take possession of while court was not in session. He put in an injunction of his own devising; he laid in a stock of provisions and water, built a barricade of dynamite boxes in the mouth of the tunnel, took up his position with a Winchester, and defied the sheriff and posse to oust him till the case could be tried; and the sheriff, not seeing any way to dissolve the injunction, left him strictly alone. Later, the court found for his clients.

In the same city he had heard that an Italian named Carrera had made some slanderous remarks about him. Though this Carrera weighed nearly 200 lbs. and Denny at that time only about 125 lbs., he went up to the former's office with a paper for him to sign, retracting what he had formerly said. Carrera refused, and Denny beat him till he signed. Then Denny took the document to the office of the daily paper and asked them to publish Carrera's free and full retractation. But as the document had accumulated much blood during the progress of negotiations, the editor refused to publish it on the ground that "Carrera did not sign that of his own free will and volition." "Sure he did," said Denny; "I made him."

Silver City had the reputation of being a camp in which more men were killed than any other in the United States. On one occasion a young fellow was shot in a billiard hall and was laid upon one of the tables to pass away in comfort. He had been what is known as a "grandstander" all his life (playing to the gallery), and as he lay there dying he suddenly raised himself on his elbow and said to the assembled crowd, "Boys, ain't I dying brave"—a grandstander to the last!

Kingston, New Mexico, was divided into two factions, Denny at the head of one and a man named Bill Langly at the head of the other. One day Denny was walking down the street, and happened to be unarmed, when Bill Langly stepped out of a saloon and emptied his pistol at Denny across the street. Denny, who was walking towards Bill when he started shooting, did not increase his pace by the fraction of a second, but calmly walked on past Langly down to the blacksmith's shop that Harry Carter owned at the time. Though Bill was a good shot he had been drinking, and so missed Denny with all six shots. Just as Harry Carter, who had heard and seen the shooting, ran out with a Winchester, which he handed to Denny, the sheriff came and arrested Langly. Denny walked out into the middle of the road, dropped on his knee, and, just as he was about to shoot, a woman happened to step into the line of fire; by the time she moved out of the way Langly and the sheriff had turned the corner and were out of sight. That woman unconsciously averted a wholesale killing, for while Denny knelt in the street some of the opposing faction had him covered from the door of a saloon, and Harry Carter and some of Denny's friends were covering these men from the doorway of the smithy.

Denny does not forget the friends of his days of poverty now that he is a millionaire, for though Harry Carter has been working here as yard foreman it is simply of his own wish, because he preferred to feel independent. But Harry knows that his wife and children are provided for, no matter what may happen to him. Denny has offered to start him in business, but he does not care for this. Another friend and old-time partner is Tom Grand, whom I mentioned before as being down here prospecting for Denny. He is doing so under the following terms: Denny pays all expenses, and will put up the money necessary to develop any mine that is found, and the proceeds will be divided evenly. This also leaves a man feeling fairly independent, more so than if he were a mere pensioner.

Grand is a very good friend of mine, and as nice a man as one would wish to meet anywhere, yet he has the record of having killed three men in fights and seriously wounded four others; and at one time he was hunted over the hills of New Mexico by the state militia. He was generally very quiet, though full of fun, and I never could get him to tell me of any of his shooting scrapes, but on one occasion I saw even a drunken man realise that he was a bad man to fool with. A party of us were standing talking in front of the railway station in Guadalajara when a man we all knew came along just drunk enough to be aggressive, and began to make himself objectionable. Tom Grand had just come in from the mountains, and the clothes he had on were rough and dusty, and this attracted Mr. Drunk. He walked up to Tom and said, "My heaven, Grand, you look tough" (*i.e.* rough and dirty). "Yes," said Tom, putting his face close up to the other, "and I'm just as tough as I look" (*i.e.* bad customer). The other understood the play on the words and the look on Tom's face, and backed away full of apologies and did not bother us any more.

The life some of these prospectors lead would kill any man who was not made of iron and had not courage to spare. Tom Grand was telling me of one experience of his when he was opening up a tunnel one winter all by himself, forty miles from the nearest habitation. It was 15° F. below zero, and he could find nothing to burn but sage brush. Any one who knows or has seen sage brush can imagine what a delightfully cheerful fire it would make! Then the loneliness would drive most men crazy. On another occasion Grand, Denny, and another man were up in Colorado prospecting in the Grand Canyon, when the third man fell over the bluff to a ledge 150 feet below. They had no means of getting up the body for burial, and all they could do was to lower a red blanket by strings till it covered the body; and so they had to leave him, trusting that nothing would touch the body for fear of the blanket. It is hard to get these men to talk of the past—they live in the present and the future. Harry Carter once told me of a narrow escape he had years ago at Kingston, New Mexico. I was mentioning a case of a policeman and he said, "Why, I had just such a thing happen to me." He had got into an argument with a friend of his who was pretty drunk at the time. The argument waxed warm, when suddenly this man jerked out his gun and swore he would kill Carter. Harry was taken by surprise and was unarmed. He was leaning against the open door, and as he told it to me in his own words, "Right back of the door at my elbow there was a Winchester rifle leaning against the wall, which I had noticed as I came in. When the drunken idiot threw his gun down on me, I remembered it, and it flashed across my mind that I would jump back, grab the rifle, and take my chances. All that kept me from doing it was the thought that the darned thing might be empty, in which case I would have looked like a fool and been killed sure. I found out later that it was not only loaded but had a cartridge in the barrel" (he meant he would not have had to work the lever to throw one in the barrel). "Still, as things turned out, it was just as well I did not get hold of it. While I was debating what to do, Jack was getting himself all worked up to the shooting point, and the madder he got the nearer he came to me, cursing all the time like a trooper. I was expecting him to shoot any minute, when he stepped too close and I saw my chance. I made a quick grab for the gun, and, as luck would have it, my hand slid down the barrel and the hammer fell on the fork here between the thumb and first finger; that was all that saved me." "Well," I said, as he stopped, "what did you do to him?" "Do to him? why, I didn't do anything to him; he was a friend of mine, and would never have thought of hurting me if he had been sober." After a few minutes' thought, he said, "Oh yes I did, too—I kept the gun, and it was a fine Colt's 45."

One day I was telling Harry Carter of what I had seen in the Silver King Saloon in San Antonio. He said, "Well, once I saw a thing like that in Kingston, which at that time was a very small camp, but it turned out different from what you described. Jim and Ben had trouble down in a saloon. Jim said to Ben, 'I've got no show because I'm not heeled.' 'Don't let that bother you,' said Ben; 'come on up to my cabin and I'll heel you.' So up they went, and, while Jim stayed outside, Ben went in and brought him out a pistol. They agreed to back off five paces and then empty their guns. But at the very first shot Jim shot Ben square between the eyes with the borrowed gun."

Harry Carter left the company last year and went back to California, where he has bought a ranch and is farming, and I have certainly missed him, both as a great help in the business, and as a good fellow out of working hours.

I mentioned that since my arrival in Mexico some of my views had been changed as regards American business methods. Rather I should say that I have at last come in contact with American gentlemen in business, and not the class I had heretofore met. I will now try and describe our manager in Mexico, Mr. H. Wilkin, and his assistant, Mr. P. H. Harway, under whom directly I worked for the first six years I was with the company. Mr. H. Wilkin is a young man, probably two or three years younger than myself, standing some two inches over six feet in his socks, with shoulders to correspond, fair hair and blue eyes. He is a lawyer by profession, and a born diplomat: he would have made a great success if he had entered the United States Diplomatic Service. I have seen him take a hostile board of aldermen and have them all agreeing with him in an hour's talk. When we had some trouble in Chihuahua I saw him talk suggestions into the governor's head in such a way that the governor really believed that he had originated them himself, and felt quite proud in consequence. To show his kindness to those under him I will mention two instances where I was the beneficiary. When in

Tampico I broke down from climate and overwork, and the doctor ordered me off the job. I was in such a nervous condition that, seeing that I could not hold down the job, and wishing to make the way clear for the company, I sent in my resignation. As soon as Mr. Wilkin received my letter he got on the train, came down to Tampico, and came to see me. He said, "Let me have your leggings and your horse, then go home, forget the job, forget you wrote me, and rest. I will take your job off your hands!" This he did till I was fit to take up the reins again. Later, in Morelia, I had my room in the hotel looted; besides all my clothes, I lost some of the company's money, all in small silver, that I had there for safe keeping (it is very hard to get change here, so when one gets it one holds on to it to pay the men). When Mr. Wilkin heard of the robbery he immediately wrote me to reimburse myself out of company funds for the entire loss, and so charge it upon the books. These are things a man with any red blood in his veins does not forget.

Mr. P. H. Harway is also a man well over six feet, about the same age as the manager, and took his degree as mining engineer. I worked directly under his orders for the first six years, but he left our company to take charge of Mr. Denny's gas company in Mexico city, as vice-president and general manager. I never think of him without the kindliest feelings and deep gratitude for the thousands of kindnesses he has shown me during the years we worked together. At first there was some little friction before we understood one another's peculiarities, and before I appreciated his great business ability. Most heads of jobs take all the credit to themselves, but Paul Harway, in a report to the directors in California, gave most of the credit for our good showing to Harry Carter and myself. This at the time meant $25 per month more salary to each of us. Paul Harway was the practical man of affairs of the company, and he and Mr. Wilkin made a team which was bound to force any business ahead, and we have been much crippled since he left. These two young fellows represent one of the best traits of American character. They are both sons of wealthy fathers, yet neither of them would be content to loaf at home. Paul Harway once said to me, "I want in later life to feel that I have *done* something, and made my mark, no matter how small." If only all wealthy men's sons were like that, more especially in England, how the world would go ahead. But it is more often that the man with push lacks capital, and the young fellow with capital lacks push. Harry Carter was fond of telling me that "An Englishman says, 'Thank God, I have a father'; while the American and German say, 'Thank God, I have a son.'"

CHAPTER XXXVI

Macdonald Institute at Guelph—Agricultural College—Their value to students—Back to work through Texas.

In March 1908 the doctor advised me to send my wife north for a change, as she had lived too many years in a southern climate, so I sent her back to Guelph, Canada, where she was born. In October of the same year I got leave from the company, and went to bring the family back, my first holiday in four years. On my way up I stopped some hours in St. Louis, where I saw Taft, the president-elect, who was then on a stumping-tour, and was speaking in St. Louis. The country was election crazy, and all that men could talk about was the elections, and, as is always the case in America, election stories were on everybody's lips. Two that I heard I will give here. A republican orator was holding forth in New York, and after his speech he said he would be glad to answer any arguments brought by the other side. After two or three men had made remarks and been answered, an old Irish-American got up and said, "Eight years ago they told us to vote for Bryan and that we would be prosperous. Oi did vote for Bryan, and Oi've niver been so prosperous in all my loife, so now, begory, Oi'm going to vote for Bryan again." For the benefit of those who do not understand American politics I may say that Bryan was the Democratic candidate who ran against Taft, and had run each time for the eight years previously and been beaten each time. The other story relates to a Democratic big gun who was to speak in a small Texas town where the people were mostly prohibitionists. He arrived on the speakers' stand pretty intoxicated; not incapable of making his speech, but his unsteady walk and flushed face told the tale to the people, and the audience hissed and howled. He held up his hand for silence, and when it was restored he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, when a statesman of my prominence consents to appear in such a small one-horse town as this is, he must be either drunk or crazy. I prefer to be considered an inebriate."

When I arrived in Guelph, which I had not seen for nearly fourteen years, I found it wonderfully changed for the better, and as for the old college I should hardly have known it. Since I was there they had built, with money bestowed by Sir William C. Macdonald (the tobacco millionaire of Canada), a woman's institute called the Macdonald Institute. Here young women are taught domestic science, which includes—elementary chemistry, and chemistry of foods, cooking, sanitation, household administration, laundry work, sewing, child-study, biology, bacteriology, home nursing, and emergency nursing. Then there are also many short courses, one teaching advanced sewing, which takes in dressmaking, millinery, embroidery, textiles, colour and design. After they have grasped all this they should be ready to marry and make good housewives.

This Macdonald Institute and the various short courses are simply crowded, girls coming from all over the country to take them. Some to learn to be housekeepers, some to prepare for marriage, and even girls of wealthy families to learn to take proper care of their homes. Attached to the Institute is the Macdonald Hall, also given by the same gentleman, where 110 students board and lodge at a charge of from $3 to $3.50 per week. Those that cannot be accommodated in the hall are found lodgings round town in well-known, respectable boarding-houses. For farmers' daughters, and more especially for young women whose families have come from abroad to settle in the country, this Institute is invaluable, as is the Agricultural College for young men.

I heard in Guelph of a case of an English widow, her two daughters, and one son who had come to take up land and settle in the country. The mother and the two daughters went to the Institute while the son took a course in the College. When they had all graduated they moved west, bought a farm, and are doing well. In the college, too, there have been many changes. The course now is four years for the degree of B.S.A. (Bachelor of the Science of Agriculture), instead of three as formerly, and the range of studies has been much extended. It now includes animal husbandry, agriculture, arithmetic, book-keeping, botany, chemistry, dairying, farm mechanics, field husbandry, geology, zoology, bacteriology, horticulture, poultry, veterinary, entomology, forestry, French, or German. And under the head of physics: agricultural engineering, electricity, surveying, and drainage, calorimetry, cold storage, and meteorology.

This seems to cover the ground pretty well for a farmer, but farming is now becoming a science as much as other professions. The cost to a non-resident student (*i.e.* one whose parents do not reside and pay taxes in Ontario) is for tuition $40 per year, laboratory fees $1.50 per year for the first two years, and $5 per year for the last two years, and between $4 and $5 per year for chemicals and other materials. The board is $3 per week, but the net cost for board and tuition during the first two years need not pass $125 per year for a non-resident student who works regularly and faithfully in the outside departments.

One of the new rules practically does away with what I before said was one of the handicaps of an English student. He must now produce certificates of having spent *at least one year on a farm*, and must have a practical knowledge of ordinary farm operations, such as harnessing and driving horses, ploughing, harrowing, drilling, &c. And his knowledge will be tested by an examination at entrance. The terms are from 15th September to 22nd December, and from 4th January to 15th April, thus allowing farmers' sons to go home for seeding, haying, and harvesting, and non-resident students to get work on a farm during these operations; or, if they prefer, they can remain at the college and work on its farm, for which they are paid. Since I was there the college has made great improvements in its accommodation. Mr. Massey built and presented to the college the Massey Hall and Library, in which are held the literary meetings, concerts, &c., and which has a seating capacity for 450 people, while the library has room for 80,000 volumes. They have also a fine gymnasium with a swimming-bath in the basement, besides another open-air swimming-bath. A new machinery hall, 146 feet by 64 feet, has been built, in which manual training and farm mechanics are taught. There are also other new buildings too numerous to mention. Last year 367 students attended Macdonald's Institute, and 794 students attended the College, either taking the entire course or the various short courses. To show how the college is patronised by people from all over the world I took this list of the hailing-places of the foreign students: nine from the Argentine Republic, Belgium one, England twenty-nine, Egypt one, Scotland eight, France one, Germany one, Ireland three, India two, Japan three, Jamaica two, Mexico one, South Africa one, Spain two, United States twenty-four. My old friend Creelman is now president of the college through which he worked his way, and in his hands the reputation of the college is spreading far and wide.

After spending a month in Guelph, we started back by easy stages, and stopped one day in St. Louis, one day in San Antonio, and two days at Cline, my old stamping-ground. Texas has boomed in the past ten years, and land that was selling there for $2.50 per acre at the time I left in 1902 is now, 1912, worth from $60 to $100 per acre, and cotton is being raised on what was considered rather poor grazing-land. And as Texas is getting wealthy, it is also getting very moral. No more gun-plays, no more gambling, and not even any more whisky in the greater part of the state.

There is even a state-law prohibiting a man from taking a drink out of his own bottle on the trains, or playing a game of cards for fun in any public place, which includes trains. They tell about Judge J——, of San Antonio, going to the smoking-room on the Pullman to get a drink of water. When he picked up the glass he smelled whisky. He glared round the room, and demanded who had been drinking whisky on the train contrary to law. After he had repeated his question a couple of times a young fellow said in a shaky voice, "I did, judge." "Well," thundered the judge, "how dare you hide the bottle?" They also tell a story about this judge's memory for faces. A prisoner was before him who denied ever having been arrested before, yet the judge was positive he knew him for an old offender. Finally the judge said, "Oh, I know you, and you can't fool me; now, own up, have I not seen you often before me?" "Yes," finally replied the prisoner, "I'm the bar-tender in the saloon across the way."

Of course, these strict prohibition laws in some of the counties have started every known scheme for secret whisky selling. They tell about a secret-service man who was trying to catch a nigger whom he suspected of acting as distributor for the whisky men. He met him on the street one day and asked him, in a whisper, if he knew where he could get some whisky to drink. "I specs I can get you some if you gimme $2," said the nigger. The detective handed the $2 to the coon, who said, "You hold this box of shoes till I come back," and hurried off round the corner. The detective waited patiently for a couple of hours and no nigger. So he decided he had been buncoed, and went up to the police station with the box of shoes. When the box was opened, inside it, carefully wrapped in tissue paper, was a quart of whisky! I was telling a Texan about the thieving qualities of the Mexican here, and he argued that they could not be any worse than the negro in the south. Said he, a nigger preacher was warning his congregation against the evils of drinking, of theft, against robbing chicken-coops, and stealing melons. When he got to this part of his discourse up jumped one of the members and started for the door. "Whar am yer goin' brudder?" said the preacher. "I'se goin' fer mah coat kase yo jes minds me whar I lef it." They also tell about a lady who left $2 at the cottage of a sick, coloured lady to buy a chicken to make into broth. As she stepped out of the door she heard the sick woman say to her boy, "Here, you Mose, bring me dat money, and go get the chicken in the natural way."

CHAPTER XXXVII

Puebla, the misgoverned—Justice under Colonel Cabrera—Royal Family of Chihuahua—Tampico—Presidents Diaz and Madero.

IN 1909 I went to Puebla, to take charge of a large contract there, and came in contact with another kind of governor from our old friend Don Miguel Ahumada. He also was an old-time soldier (friend and supporter of Diaz), General Mucio Martinez, but as different from Colonel Don Miguel Ahumada as night is from day. Puebla was the most misgoverned state in the country, and the barefaced robbery and oppression openly carried on was a revelation to me. All the butcher business, public coaches, the best of the liquor business, and the theatre were in the hands of a clique headed by the governor. The *Jefe Politico* had bought from the state the right to all fines. The effect of this was twofold; habitual offenders, drunks, thieves, ladies of the Vida Alegro, &c., were turned loose as soon as their friends paid the fines, and never got jail sentences because they were such a profitable source of revenue. They would soon err again, be rearrested, and fined once more. I was told that any policeman who did not make a certain number of arrests in the month lost his job. On the other hand, the casual offenders (more especially those with a trade) always got jail sentences, which they worked out on private jobs or contracts of the *Jefe Politico*. This man made a fortune in less than six years, and skipped for France when the revolution broke out.

The *Jefe's* assistant, Colonel Cabrera, was the chief of police till killed by one of the members of the Serdan family at the outbreak of the revolution. I found this was the man who could either be of much assistance or annoyance to me on the contract, and I went to call on him to find out what could be arranged. I told him, in the course of conversation, that I needed three watchmen on the job, and he at once offered to get them for me. He asked as to pay, &c., and then sent me three of the city's secret-service men, and, I presume, pocketed their pay, as he was more than friendly to me during the time I was there. On one occasion a man of some importance in the city walked across the fresh asphalt and one of my men spoke rather rudely to him about his lack of brains and culture. He promptly had my foreman arrested, and in the argument that followed two or three more of the men got arrested for taking the foreman's part.

As I was riding down the street I met them all on the way to the commissaria, and had the matter explained to me. I rode on ahead, and went to see Colonel Cabrera. When I had finished explaining the matter to him he called an assistant and told him to go down and tell the judge to turn my men loose as soon as they arrived without further investigation. I thanked him and went down to see the order carried out. When we arrived in the court-room the complainant was in the middle of his speech, and the assistant, instead of going up and whispering the order in the judge's ear, said, in a loud voice, "Colonel Cabrera's compliments, and you are to turn these men loose without further investigation." Such was the justice one could get under these men; but it was really comical to see the complainant's face at such summary methods.

On another occasion I went to see him about one of my men that I had discharged, and who had gone up to my office and scared my clerk nearly into a fit by waving a pistol and saying he wanted to kill me. Cabrera asked me if I had a pistol, and on my replying in the affirmative he said, "Then it is very simple, you shoot him the first time you see him near your office, before he can shoot you." I told him that was all right, but I did not want to get into jail. "No," he said, "that need not bother you, as he has threatened your life before witnesses." I happened to meet this man a day or two later on the street, and went up to him and said I had heard he was looking for trouble, and that Colonel Cabrera had told me to shoot him if he came near my office. But he denied all enmity, &c., &c. I have always found it best to tackle these cases at once, for if you do not treat them with a high hand you are liable to get shot in the back some night.

From Puebla I went to Chihuahua to take charge of a contract there. The town and state of Chihuahua used to be run by what was known as the Royal Family. The head of the family is Terrazas, who owns in ranches almost the entire state, and the balance of the family consists of the Creels, the Munoz, and the Quilty, and I was told that there were 116 first cousins. All these, of course, had to have a living, and they were all provided for. One of them was building a large edifice at the time I was there, and was using one of the principal streets as his stoneyard to cut the stone for the building. He had the street closed to traffic, and was getting along very comfortably; unfortunately, this street was one that was in our contract to be paved. When we had completed nearly all the other streets we asked him to please move out and let us in, and his answer was, "I wish to get my work completed by a certain date.

Naturally it will inconvenience you, but that cannot be helped. Of course if you think that you can have me moved, why, go ahead and try, but I think you will find that I am a man of some importance." So the interview closed, and we found that he was indeed of some importance, and that nothing could be done. I was told that the only way to go into business up there was to get some member of the family in with you, and the facts bear this out. They own the street car-lines, the brewery, the lumber-yard, the brick-yard, the biscuit company, the electric power and light company, and the slaughterhouse, and if they missed anything it was because it was not worth having. Yet, with it all, possibly because of it, the town is a very busy one, though it was this state of affairs, and the way things were run in Puebla, that brought about the revolution. The people had nothing to lose, and might gain by a change of government.

From Chihuahua I went first to Durango, where I only stayed a short time; and then to Tampico, where we had another large contract. Tampico is only a small town of possibly 35,000 people, but one of the busiest towns in the republic, with an American population of about 1000 people. The main industry, of course, is oil, and most of the men are employed or connected in some way with that industry. But of late years many settlers have gone into the country to buy farms, and cultivate tropical fruits, and some, at least, seem to be doing well. But the country has many drawbacks, at least for a Saxon; for, though the climate is not at all bad, the insect-pests are numerous, and keep one too active for such a warm climate. The soil which is so good for the tropical fruit is also good to raise tropical jungle, and the jungle of the Tampico country is something that one must see to believe. However, those that have taken up farms seem to be well satisfied, and are making money.

For sport, Tampico and the surrounding country can hardly be beaten in the Republic, both for fishing, hunting, and boating. While I was there the record tarpon up to date was caught (7 feet 5 inches long); but besides tarpon there are many other game fish—the yellow tail, black and red snapper, various kinds of rock-fish, and I caught one shark, 7 feet long, which gave me plenty of fun. Tampico saw nothing of the revolution, though after it was all over we had one day, or rather night and day, of rioting, which kept everybody in a state of anxiety. Of the revolution every one has no doubt read in the papers more than I could tell. On the whole, I think it passed off very well, all except the horrible slaughter of helpless Chinamen in Torreon, of whom 303 were killed in cold blood for the money they were supposed to have. One American there saved the lives of thirty-six of them. He was the yard-master, and got that number into an empty box-car, which he switched round all day long while the rioters searched the trains for them. For a little while the changes were rapid, and both in Guadalajara and Morelia they had three different governors in one day. Diaz was not beaten when he finally decided to leave the country. He had been kept in ignorance up till the last moment by his friends (?) as to the true state of affairs, and when he found out that the people as a whole were against him, he resigned to save further bloodshed. Since then we have had rumours of counter-revolution after counter-revolution, but none has so far materialised, except the fiasco of General Reyes, who could only get together seven followers. He is another "grandstander," and when he gave himself up he said he had decided not to go on with the "War."

One hears much of the uprising of Zapata, but Zapatism is not a revolution against any particular government but against a condition. The people are demanding that the land shall be divided up amongst them, so that they will not be slaves of the *hacendados*, and when once this is done we shall hear the last of Zapata.

At first the feeling against Diaz was very strong in the country, for the people did not understand, then, that it was his so-called friends who were to blame, and not he. Now, however, this feeling is dying out, and you hear many people talking of Diaz, and agreeing that he has done much for his country, for which the country should be grateful to him. Many people are fond of decrying Madero, saying he is not a man of force, but if he had been a second Diaz they would, on the other hand, have been crying, "We have exchanged one tyrant for another." It seems to me, an outsider, that he will "make good" if allowed the chance, but any man who tries to fill Diaz' clothes will have a hard job of it.

I am still seeking fortune in America; I have sought it in Canada, the United States, and Mexico, but it appears as far off in 1912 as ever it did. America is a land of great opportunities, but rarely for the Briton or the man without capital. I have written my life to date, attempting at the same time to depict my surroundings, and if any one has got half the pleasure out of reading these rambling reminiscences that I have had in going back in spirit over the old scenes, I am satisfied.

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